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THE KNOWABLENESS OF GOD

ITS RELATION TO THE THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE IN ST. THOMAS

DISSERTATION

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF PHILOSOPHY OF THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA IN PART FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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ABBREVIATIONS.

C. G. for Contra Gentes. C. G., l. 1, c. 10 means, Contra Gentes, book 1, chapter 10.

Sum. Theol. for Summa Theologica. Sum. Theol., I, q. 10., a. 1 ad 2 means, Summa Theologica, first part, question 10, article 1, second objection.

De Veri. for De Veritate. De Veri., q. 1, a. 2 means De Veritate, question 1, article 2.

Com. on Lomb. I, Dis. 5, q. 1. a. 3 means, Commentary on the Lombard, first book, distinction 5, question 1, article 3.

Others can be understood from these.

INTRODUCTION.

If truth is God's handwriting, the ink is indelible and the page indestructible. If the world is God's, it cannot deny its allegiance. The Conception of God as found in the works of St. Thomas is the expression of the power of the Creator as witnessed to by the work of His hands. The question of God has never been a problem of the past; in some phase it has always demanded the best thought of the best thinkers of all epochs. There are times, however, when it seems to arouse especial attention — when its full import for all thought is pressed home. We are now in such a time, for we have gone to the very root of the problem—we are now concerned with the Idea of God. Not so much the existence of God, nor a discussion of His Attributes specifically, but the quest is for a Conception of God that will quell our uneasiness in presence of many apparent confusions, and satisfy our demand for an adequate explanation. Many have been and are to-day seeking this Concept, but it is an idle attempt unless the path that leads to it has been shown to be sure and consistent, for this Idea is not the product of bare thought. In other words, our Concept can

only have the validity of the methods that have been employed in reaching it.

Prof. Ladd has pointed out what he considers preliminary to the formation of the Concept of God. We must know the development of man's religious life, we must know human nature in its totality, and, finally, we must have "points of view for regarding the sum-total of human experience which will bear the test of the severest critical and reflective thinking."[1] This last point as stated in another place—"A tenable and consistent theory of knowledge is then, an indispensable part of the prolegomena to an argument for the being of God,"[2] is what we wish to show in the present paper. Our aim—and this is the implicit burden of all Scholastic treatments of this subject—is to show the intimate connection between the Theory of Knowledge set forth by St. Thomas and his handling of the Knowableness of God. The principles he uses in arriving at a knowledge of any subject are unchanged when he comes to discuss the question of our knowledge of God. Ladd also notes that we must have some theory of reality—we shall state likewise the theory of reality held by our author and follow it throughout. "In general the cause of

[1] G. T. Ladd, *Prolegomena to an Argument for the Being of God. Phil. Rev.*, v. 12, pp. 130-137.

[2] *Loc. cit.*, p. 136.

Theodicy is bound up with that of Metaphysics. The science of God is a part of the science of being."[3] The relation of the knowableness of God to the theory of knowledge is so close in Aquinas that a presentation of the two together may give a more satisfying view of the position he held, and which Christian Philosophy also holds, than those unacquainted with his works and not in sympathy with his thoughts are accustomed to have. With this purpose we have written what cannot be new to students of Scholastic Philosophy, but what may serve to awaken in others a friendly regard for a Conception of God arrived at by ways so unlike the ones they are wont to use.

There are a few points in the method of St. Thomas that are worth noting at the outset. He begins with a vague sort of a Conception of God that he considers common to all men. By induction he arrives at a concept more specific yet not complete; this concept he treats by deduction and evolves its implications. The development of this concept by deduction is done according to carefully formulated tests; its necessity is due to the nature of our mind, for God is truly one, all attributes are identical in Him, but we can only know Him by considering them separately. As

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[3] Janet et Séailles, *Histoire de la Philosophie*, p. 888.

a result we have a full and many-sided concept, and no one attribute in particular is made to bear the burden of the whole.

One of the most striking differences between the attitude of Aquinas and that of Moderns who have no specific interest in the Conception of God they reach, provided it harmonizes in some way with the general trend of the philosophical systems they are following or framing unto themselves, is the directness and consistency with which he meets the problem in all its developments. "Even when we recognize that the modern spirit is less trammeled in its researches, we shall be forced to admit that it is to some extent hampered by the restrictions which arise from the cultivations of 'systems' and from loyalty to the traditions of the 'schools.'"[4] St. Thomas sees his way clearly and he utilizes his light to the fullest measure—there is no hesitation when it is asked is such an attribute to be found in God. At once the answer is given—and this is so because his principles are plainly before him and they are the test of his Concept. This fact is highly commendable whether we agree with his principles or not. There are few Conceptions of God given us at present—outside of Christian

[4] Prof. W. Turner, *Recent Literature on Scholastic Philosophy. The Journal of Phil., Psychol., and Scientific Methods*, April 14, 1904, p. 201.

Philosophy—where the position is ever essentially the same, that cannot be criticised on the score of unwarranted assumption, inconsistent development, incomplete presentation,—some offend against all three.

If we contrast a thought taken from Spencer and one from Paulsen with the position of Aquinas this will be evident. It will show how he admitted the truth in each of their doctrines and yet did not stop where they did. With Spencer from a consideration of Causation in the world he comes to a First Cause, but Spencer says, if we reason on the nature of this Cause we land in contradiction—"the conception of the Absolute and Infinite, from whatever side we view it, appears encompassed with contradictions",[5] and hence is practically unknowable. Paulsen, speaking of the God of Pantheists, remarks: "We cannot presume to give an exhaustive definition of the inner life of the all-real God. . . . The difference between human and divine inner life must indeed be great and thoroughgoing, so great that there can be no homogeneity at any point."[6] With this statement St. Thomas holds that we cannot have an exhaustive definition of God; his fundamental thesis—we can know God from creation as a likeness of Him—

[5] *First Principles*, p. 42.

[6] *Introd. to Phil.*, p. 252, trans.

is opposed to the second half of Paulsen's view. "From sensible things", Aquinas says, "our intellect cannot attain to a view of God's essence (inner life) because creatures are effects of God not equalling the power of the Cause. . . They lead us, however, to a knowledge of God's existence and from them we learn what we must ascribe to God."[7] Agnosticism wishes to know too much, Pantheism is too modest, as usual the mean is more satisfying. What Caldecott says of the Idea of God found in Bradley's "Appearance and Reality," we quote in a more general sense as applicable, in our opinion, to the shortcomings of much writing on this question. "Is it an impertinence to suggest to an original thinker that a consideration of the canon of 'application of terms of human thought to the Deity' formulated by Aquinas, and never surpassed in penetrative and judicious subtlety, might relieve the vacillation and inconsistency, which is the great defect of Mr. Bradley's work as it stands."[8] This, to our mind, is also the defect of Prof. Royce's "Conception", as we shall point out in the text; Prof. Royce uses the same terms as Mr. Bradley.[9]

There is no need of presenting the views of the

[7] *Sum. Theol.*, q. 12, a. 12.
[8] *The Philosophy of Religion*, p. 396.
[9] *The Conception of God*, pp. 44, 45.

thinkers of all times on our question. At most we might show how their Idea of God was an outcome of their Theory of Knowledge and Reality. We shall be content to bring to light again the view of Aquinas, for we are apt to overlook what has been done when all energies are bent on doing something new. As far as we know, the question has not been handled explicitly in the way we are presenting it, at least in English.[10] It seemed more satisfactory to give the Theory of Knowedge of Aquinas as a basis for his Conception of God, rather than start with the Conception itself and be constantly referring to a set of principles that are nowhere given together, and yet are closely connected with the subject itself.

It is but fair to admit that Aquinas had advantages in the construction and development of his Idea of God that are not at hand for many to-day who are busy with this problem. He saw guiding-posts on all sides and he was presented with a set of ideas the value of which he did not question. The teaching of the Fathers, especially St. Augustine, the attitude of his age toward the Scriptures, the doctrine

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[10] A Commentator on St. Thomas, Capreolus, handles the question practically in this way. He discusses the basic principles of knowledge, and then applies them to God. *Cfr. Revue Thomiste*, v. 8, Pégues.

and influence of the Church in her varied activities, were all helps to one who gave his attention to the Supreme Thought of all these factors. Yet withal, Aquinas saw clearly the work of reason in the question of God and set himself to know what the powers of man could do to solve its meaning. His works bear testimony to the careful and detailed method he brought to bear on this question. We are told, however, by Dr. Carus, "the God of mediaeval theologians is a mere makeshift." "The more I think about the God-problem, the surer grows my conviction that the God of science is the true God, and the God of mediaeval theologians is a mere makeshift, a substitution for the true God, a temporary surrogate of God, a surrogate which at the time was good enough for immature minds, but too often only lead people astray."[11]

Dr. Carus tells us that our conception of God will be true "if only we agree to be serious in the purification of the God idea, if only we think of God as a truly divine being, if only we are serious in looking upon Him as truly eternal, omnipresent, omniscient, omnipotent, etc." He adds the astounding sentence: "The theologians of the past have never been serious in thinking

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[11] "The God of Science," *The Monist*, April, 1904.

out these qualities of God to their very last conclusions." Without speculating on what led to this statement, or inquiring into the author's acquaintance with the writings of mediaeval theologians, I will simply remark that had he sat in the lecture-hall of Aquinas and was determined to swear by his word, he could not have followed more faithfully, in essence, the method of Aquinas than he gives signs of in the present article, especially in the paragraph beginning, "God's thoughts are not transient successive representations." The method of Aquinas in this problem is golden, and its main import is to be 'serious in the purification of the God idea'. As Dr. Carus acknowledges no allegiance to the formulator of this method, it may be advantageous to consider that when the human mind is serious, no matter at what age it lives, it will be true to itself, and its methods will be commendable though the result reached may vary. Dr. Carus violates his own dictum in dealing with the mediaeval theologians; he says, "in my opinion it is the duty of the philosopher to judge every religion according to the best interpretation that its best representatives have given it." His attitude is sufficient warrant for our recalling the Conception of God according to Aquinas, for it is certainly a Conception of a worthy representative of the mediaeval theologians.

HISTORICAL.

Before we take up the problem directly, we shall say a few words on the principal works of St. Thomas in which he treats this question, and also point out briefly the position of this subject in his writings, as well as the influence that affected his view and presentation. The works that we shall outline are: *Summa Theologica*, *Summa Contra Gentes*, *Commentary* on the *Lombard*, *Quaestiones Disputatae*, *Compendium Theologiae*.

"The *Summa Theologica* is the first system of Theology scientifically carried out. The theological and speculative works of his predecessors and elder contemporaries as well as his own numerous works of many sorts are but a great and massive preparation for this work."[1] The development of theological science from the days of Anselm to those of Aquinas here finds comprehensive and systematic expression. We find the purpose of the work stated in its prologue: "Our intention in this work is to present the teaching of the Christian Religion in a way suited for the instruction of beginners." He,

[1] Werner, *Der heilige Thomas von Aquino*, v. 1, p. 801.

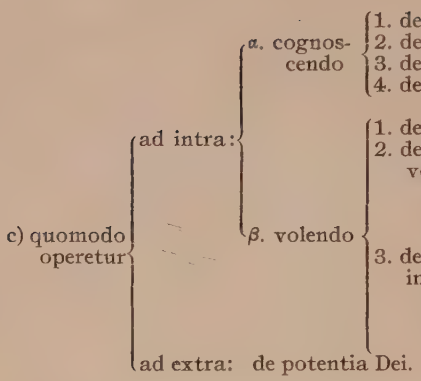
therefore, proposes to avoid questions and distinctions that confuse the beginner, and to give a connected view of the whole field of sacred knowledge. There are three parts to the work; the first treats of God in Himself, the second of man in his relation to God, the third of Christ as the way that leads to God. The parts are made up of questions; each question is divided into a number of articles, and each article opens with a few objections against the special point to be discussed; then there is a positive statement of doctrine with accompanying arguments; and finally, the previously proposed objections are answered. The first part is the one that interests us especially and only that portion which tells us what the human reason can know of God. This portion is well set forth in the following diagram taken from Werner.[2]

DE ESSENTIA DIVINA.

a) num sit;

b) quomodo
- α. sit vel potius non sit:
  1. simplicitas,
  2. perfectio (bonitas) remota omni imperfectione creaturarum,
  3. infinitas,
  4. immutabilitas,
  5. aeternitas,
  6. unitas;
- β. a nobis cognoscatur,
- γ. a nobis nominetur;

[2] *Loc. cit.*, p. 803.



This diagram comprises questions 2-26 of the Summa Theologica. It is completed for our purpose by adding questions 44-49, relating specifically to the First Cause of all things, duration and distinction of created things, evil and its cause.

The *Summa Contra Gentes* is an Apology for the Christian Religion. The title given it by St. Thomas himself shows this: Summa de Veritate Fidei Catholicae. It was written at the request of St. Raymond of Pennafort, who wished to have a systematic presentation of the doctrine of the Church as a defence against the Moors in Spain. The work is divided into four books and each book is made up of chapters. The first three deal with doctrine in the light of reason, the fourth is concerned with the data of revelation as beyond reason. The question of

God is paramount in these pages: God in Himself, His essence and attributes, are treated of in the first book, God as the efficient and final cause of all things make up the second and third, as named.

"It is the first work in which he (Aquinas) presented his system as a coherent whole",[3] though not entirely complete, for the final expression of his thought is found in the Summa Theologica. These two works have much in common, yet differ in scope and method. The former is practically philosophical throughout,[4] the latter is principally theological, though in each there are philosophical and theological discussions according to the topic treated. In method, the former is almost entirely positive in its treatment, at least objections are seldom formally presented and answered, in the latter each article begins with a number of objections; again, in the former there are a number of arguments advanced to support each question, in the latter there is usually but one. This is due to the fact, no doubt, that St. Thomas wished to make the Summa Theologica as clear and as easy as possible, since, in his own words, he wrote it for beginners. In the Summa Contra Gentes, "It is much more a question of basis

[3] Werner, *loc. cit.*, p. 403.

[4] Hence often cited as *Summa Philosophica.*

for the points raised than a development of them, hence the desire to vindicate in severe brief presentation the right value and necessarily concise acknowledgment of the truth contained in the question by means of as large a number of reasons as possible."[5] We shall shortly recur to the position of God in these works.

In his *Commentary on the Lombard*, St. Thomas followed the division of the work of the author. There are four books containing in a systematic form the theology of the Church-God, Angels, man, creation, the saints, and like questions are discussed. Each book is made up of a number of distinctions, and these again are divided into questions and articles. The text of the Lombard served as a basis for the Commentators to give their own solution to the subject under consideration. These commentaries are rather works on the Lombard than simple expositions of his meaning. This is sufficiently evidenced for by the diversity of opinion of the various commentators. This was the first comprehensive work of St. Thomas, and it "formed a mighty foundation for the further extension of theological efforts. The Commentary on the Lombard contains his whole teaching . . . though not in the thoroughly

[5] Werner, *loc. cit.*, p. 404.

constructed form of an independent system[6]."

The *Quaestiones Disputatae* comprise the lectures delivered by St. Thomas in the University of Paris after he had finished his Commentary on the Lombard. "These are concerned with the most important and the most excellent objects of theological speculation, namely, with those matters which are treated of in the first and second parts of the Summa Theologica[7]." They contain in rounded form the treatment of certain questions that a commentary, following a given plan, forbids one attempting. There are sixty-three questions in all with four hundred articles; all these are given under a few general heads: De Potentia, De Malo, De Spiritualibus Creaturis, De Anima, De Unione Verbi, De Virtutibus, De Veritate. The articles are preceded by numerous objections, sometimes as many as thirty, under the form *quod videtur non*. St. Thomas gave his "best and most active attention to their elaboration. . . It has been remarked that Thomas wished to bring the art of the Scholastic Dialectic to its highest perfection in these *Quaestiones Disputatae*."[8] They were written rather for the trained philosopher than for

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[6] *Ibid.*, pp. 358-359.

[7] *Ibid.*, p. 360.

[8] Werner, *loc. cit.*, pp. 360-1.

the beginner.[9] Under the heading De Veritate, the question of knowledge and of God are handled in detail.

The *Compendium Theologiae* was written for his dear companion, Bro. Reginald. Its original plan was to embrace briefly all theology, in three books, based on the virtues, faith, hope, and charity. The first book alone, containing two hundred and forty-six chapters, was completed. The chapters are short and concise. "The whole work is an intelligible and succinct summary view of the system of St. Thomas."[10] This is strikingly true on the points of God, man's nature, and man's relation to the First Cause. "The doctrine of one God and the necessity of thinking of the condition of His existence, is derived in a strong and continuous series from the proof of a first highest mover of the world."[11]

The problem of God occupies the first place in all the works of Aquinas. "There is not a single one of St. Thomas's works that does not begin with the discussion of the existence and attributes of God."[12] This statement shows the

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[9] A. Portmann, *Die Systematik in den Quaestiones Disputatae des hl. Thomas von Aquino, Jahr. f. Phil. u Spek Theol.*, 1892, pp. 127-150.

[10] Werner, *loc. cit.*, p., 389.

[11] *Ibid., loc. cit.*, p., 388.

[12] Jourdain, *La Philosophie de St. Thomas d'Aquin*, v. 1, p. 184.

importance attached to the question of God in our author's system; a glance at any of his greater writings will suffice to make this evident. God, for him, is the creative and sustaining Power of all things, and He is also their last end. Creation in all its forms gets meaning only when viewed in relation to Him. In the development of our subject we shall see how all comes from the hand of God, how everything bears some trace of His operation, and how He is the unifying element in the variety about us. A knowledge of Him, no matter how meagre, is worth more than a thorough knowledge of all that is less than Him, for He is the greatest object that the human intelligence can consider and seek to know. "Among all the perfections found in created things, the greatest is to know God."[13] In a proem to the second question of the Summa Theologica, part I, St. Thomas gives his attitude on this question: "Since the principal intention is to give a knowledge of God, and not only as He is in Himself, but also as He is the Source and End of things, especially of rational creatures, we shall first treat of God, secondly, of the tendency of the rational creature toward God, and thirdly, of Christ who is our way in tending toward God." Here we have his

[13] *C. G.*, l 1, c. 47.

principal work outlined, and its basic thought is God.

In both Summae, God is the all-embracing, all-important problem. The Idea of God is the pivotal idea in these works. The subsequent developments and deductions are so intimately bound up with it that all stands or falls together with it. This is seen very strikingly in the fact that St. Thomas considers God as the cause of all things and likewise as their last end—thus comprising the whole realm of the actual and the possible under all aspects. It is not an arbitrary measure on the part of Aquinas to give this prominence and preeminence to the God-question, for it arises from the very nature of the subject itself, from the very content of the Idea of God. The introductory remarks to the main divisions of the questions in the first part of the Summa Theologica show this clearly; the same is evident in the other Summa where he devotes a chapter (l. 1, c. 9) to outlining his order and method, saying, he will first treat of God in Himself, then of God as Creator, and finally of the relation of creation to God as an end.

It is natural to ask in view of the detailed presentation of this problem in St. Thomas, how much of this delicate net-work is due to his workmanship. Is he responsible for all, or is he only a systematizer? Neither, exactly. He

inherited an Idea of God that showed signs of the thoughts of some great minds, and which had been growing and becoming richer under the guidance of a solicitous tradition; but this Idea was fully grasped by him and set forth in a way that combined all previous thought, and yet evidenced a selection that proclaims the master mind and gives title to originality. A cursory view of the principal authors he drew from, and the condition of philosophy at his time, will give his position more accurately.

Among the Greeks, the influence of Aristotle and Plato is unmistakable. His proofs for the existence of God are taken from them. God as Prime Mover and Intelligence are found in Aristotle, and "Thomas derived the most incisive proofs for the existence of God and for many of the divine perfections from Plato."[14] That Aquinas went beyond the Conception of God arrived at by these two philosophers is no matter for surprise, for their Conception had been enriched by modification and addition long before the days of our author. In the Christian era, St. Augustine, and Dionysius the Areopagite, and Boethius are largely utilized. They are quoted frequently, and some of their statements are taken as a

[14] Schneider, *Jahr. f. Phil. u. Spek. Theol.*, 1893, p. 470.

basis for the development of the particular aspect of God he is considering. It is true, St. Thomas quotes from other writers both before and after Christ, yet there is not the same practical intimacy betrayed as in the case of the writers just mentioned. He considered of sufficient importance the *De Divinis Nominibus* of Dionysius and the *De Trinitate* of Boethius to write a commentary on them. His presentation however, is rather the outcome of his assimilating the various elements that attended the growth of the Conception of God than a conscious borrowing from different sources; he brought his synthetic and selective mind to bear on the materials the past had gathered, and threw these into the form that Christian Philosophy has recognized as its own since his time. The synthesis is partly due to the stimulation of his age, and partly to the actuality of certain problems at that epoch. Werner points out that the fundamental thoughts or axioms in the questions 2-26 of the Summa Theologica are derived from some philosopher, some philosophical writing, or Father of the Church, and thus concludes the acquaintance of Aquinas with the learning of the past and his leaning toward tradition; we might add, it is a characteristic of the work of St. Thomas to assimilate all the good he knew of in the

efforts of others, no matter who they were.

The question of God was given especial consideration in the generations immediately preceding Aquinas. The attitude of St. Anselm, who thought about the subject, with a view of giving it a simple yet comprehensive basis, until he was weary and about to desist from his inquiries, is a worthy introduction to the attention it received at the hands of Scholasticism during its growing days. "Theodicy was always regarded by the Scholastics as one of the most important chapters in philosophy . . . Theodicy (and it alone) remained faithful to the proper genus of Scholasticism."[15] The close connection between Theodicy and Religion in those days made this a practical necessity. Before St. Thomas took up the question, the Schools had witnessed the Controversy about the Universals; Eclecticism, Mysticism, Pantheism, in turn passed by; the Arabian and Jewish Thinkers had given their version of Greek Philosophy that called for attention; his contemporaries or immediate predecessors, Alexander of Hales, Bonaventure, Albert the Great, wrote and influenced thought. There was certainly activity from the Pantheism of Scotus Erigena to the Angel of the Schools.

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[15] DeWulf, *Histoire de la Philosophie Mediéval*, p. 155.

The merit of Aquinas consists in the fact that he was not bewildered by the divergent views of previous thinkers, and that he did not branch off into a particular view of his own but accepted the truth contained in each, refuted fearlessly what he considered error, and out of it all gave us a conception that justly appreciates the careful efforts of many minds and ages.

If we specify in greater detail the condition of thought at the time of St. Thomas, we shall be in a better position to judge the value of the statement so frequently made that Aquinas was little else than an imitator. Philosophy in the Middle Ages was not a unit; there was much diversity in the opinions held and defended. Scholasticism was but one form of philosophic thought, and thus does not stand for Mediaeval Philosophy as a whole, as DeWulf and Lindsay very well point out. "The philosophy of scholasticism should be understood as really not the same thing as mediaeval philosophy."[16] This distinction is important in the sense that it recalls the fact—too often overlooked—that there was great mental activity in those times, with the consequence that a thinker had to choose one view among many. Aquinas chose pure

[16] Dr. Lindsay, *Scholastic and Mediaeval Philosophy*, *Archiv f. Gesch. der Phil.*, v. 15, p. 42.

Aristotelianism, and gave form to the system that honors him as its chief exponent.

This choice implied a discrimination and an independence of thought that modifies to a large extent the imputation of a mere follower. His attitude toward the Pantheism of his time and the Arabian Philosophy are instances to the point. The statement of W. T. Harris—"Pantheism versus Christian Theism was on trial" in the days of Aquinas, is true. None the less true is his tribute to the way St. Thomas met the issue of his day regarding the problem of God. Aquinas "stated the Christian Idea so clearly in the language of the Intellect that the development of six hundred years has not superseded his philosophical forms. In fact, his comprehension is confirmed by the profoundest thought of our own time. The necessity of a philosophical system that shall make personality its central principle, and exhibit the true difference between the beings of nature and human souls should revive in our theological seminaries the study of Aquinas."[17] It is noteworthy that the discussion of the question of God during the last century was carried on along the same lines as were prominent in the Middle Ages, according to the view of Janet and Séailles. "The progress made

[17] *Journal of Speculative Philosophy*, v. 9, p. 327.

in our century consisted in sifting more precisely than ever the problem of God, in putting in presence of each other, for the first time, in an altogether direct manner, Theism and Pantheism. To limit this problem, to measure with accuracy the merits and defects of the personal and impersonal theory as such, has been the work of our century."[18] St. Thomas had to meet the Pantheism of Erigena, that of Bernard of Tours, Amaury of Bène, and David of Dinant. The last named identified God with first matter and provoked the only severe condemnation uttered by the ever mild and calm Angel of the Schools.

Pantheism was also taught by the Arabians. Creation out of nothing was unknown to them, matter was eternal. Their dualism, however, admitted of emanation, and was thus Pantheistic. They did not wish to separate God and matter absolutely, so they held that God created a first intelligence and from it all else proceeded. The source of this emanation was the *thought* of God, not His *will*. They taught the unity of the divine nature; finally, they denied to God a knowledge of individual and contingent things.[19] Ueberweg says of their philosophy:

[18] *Histoire de la Philosophie*, p. 288.

[19] Stöckl, *Gesch. der Phil. des Mittelalters*, v. 2-1, pp. 124-130.

"The whole philosophy of the Arabians was only a form of Aristotelianism, tempered more or less with Platonic conceptions."[20] And this characterization is common with the historians of philosophy; to quote another. "In their method however, in their principles by which they apprehend the universe, and in their entire system of philosophical conceptions they stand, so far as our information on the subject reaches, entirely under the combined influence of Aristotelianism and Neo-Platonism; and the same is true of the Jews."[21] Aquinas has these philosophers in mind throughout his work, and refutes them as occasion offers, and he is also careful to show by explicit argument that his own position is not open to a Pantheistic interpretation.

Perhaps the question of God is the portion of the doctrine of St. Thomas that shows best that his undoubted admiration for Aristotle did not prevent him from being an independent thinker. No one that has contrasted his theodicy with that of the Stagyrite can fail to note the larger and more thorough treatment of Aquinas, and the presence of ideas wholly absent from the work of *the* Philosopher. These additions are due to the development of the Divine Idea in Christianity, but their full comprehension and

[20] *Hist. of Phil.*, v. 1, p. 246. trans.
[21] Windelband, *A Hist.* of *Phil.*, p. 316.

expression are the work of Aquinas, and, to repeat the words of Harris, 'his comprehension is confirmed by the profoundest thought of our time.' Some writers also remark that St. Thomas never got beyond the teaching of his master, Albertus Magnus. "Thomas of Aquin is led and determined by Albert, and it would be a great mistake to consider him an independent thinker. . . . For the historian of philosophy Thomas is but a very secondary personage."[22] The relation of master and pupil in this case is of course very close, yet we can recognize the specific work of each. Windelband says justly: "The intellectual founder of this system (Scholasticism) was Albert of Bollstädt. It owes its organic completion in all directions, its literary codification, and thus its historical designation to Thomas Aquinas."[23] On the question of God itself, the *exprofesso* treatment of St. Thomas is much more extended and complete than that of his master, who only wrote as much of his *Summa* as we have, at earnest solicitation.

Eucken says of Aquinas: "He was certainly no thinker of the first order. yet he was not on this account a mind of no consequence or a fanatic. He was not much ahead of his times, but he

[22] Prantl. *Geschichte der Logik*, v. 3, p. 107.
[23] *Loc. cit.*, p. 311.

synthesized and reconstructed what the age offered, and thus satisfied a pressing need of the historical situation."[24] Dr. Lindsay, in the article referred to, though he says Scholasticism has received undue contempt, yet refers to the "servility of Aquinas before Aristotle." Prof. Dewey, in an article on Scholasticism, seems to think that Albertus and Thomas were wholly dependent on Aristotle. He says: "In spite of (or better, because of) the conviction of Albertus and St. Thomas as to the relation of Aristotle to Church dogma, they are compelled to set aside certain doctrines as simply the products of revelation, utterly inaccessible to the natural mind—it being clear that Aristotle had not taught the doctrine of the Trinity or the Incarnation, &c."[25] In contrast we have the words of Prof. Royce, "He (Thomas) also vindicated for philosophy a certain limited, but very genuine, freedom of method and of opinion, within its own province. As a result, Thomas stands from

[24] *Die Lebensanschauungen der grossen Denker*, pp 245-6, also, *Thomas von Aquino und Kant.Ein Kampf zweier Welten, Kant-Studien*, v. 6.

[25] *Dict. of Phil. and Psychol.*, Baldwin, vol. 2, p. 494. Prof. Dewey seems to forget that Albertus and St. Thomas believed in the Trinity and the Incarnation before they knew of Aristotle. They used the Stagyrite as an instrument; they explained these myteries, as far as human reason could go, by principles derived from Aristotle. This is rather evidence of independence of thought.

any fair point of view, Catholic or non-Catholic, decidedly high, not only as a theologian, but also as a rational inquirer."[26]

If we take for granted that St. Thomas was a thinker of note and did good service to his day, can we hold that he has a message for our day? Opinion ouside the Church is not of a nature to warrant an affirmative answer. What Pope Leo intended by restoring the Philosophy of St. Thomas was not an imitation in the letter of the teaching of Aquinas, not the defending of specific doctrines whereon opinion is legitimately divided, not the adhering to statements that further knowledge has shown to be untenable; this much is held in a practical manner by all who are engaged in interpreting anew to our age the teaching of Aquinas. What the Pope desired, and what all true Neo-Scholastics hold as solid, are the essential principles that underly the Philosophy of St. Thomas. These are sound and have not yet been superseded. The Neo-Scholastic Movement is a school, if you will, as the followers of Descartes, Spinoza, Kant constitute a school; in this light it is entitled to as rational a consideration as any other philosophical movement recognizing a given thinker of the past as its head. Its fitness

[26] *Pope Leo's Philosophical Movement and its Relations to Modern Thought.—Boston Evening Transcript*, July 29, 1903.

is not a matter of *a priori* judgment, but must find its justification in meeting as well, if not better, the problems that our times are trying to solve

The fitness of the Philosophy of St. Thomas, in its essentials, for our day is not admitted by non-Thomists. "The philosophy of the Middle Ages with its highest point of development, Thomas of Aquin, we considered conquered and buried," says Eucken. "Its growth in individual places seemed rather a souvenir of the past than a condition of the present, or even a germ of the future, but now it has forced itself again with its world-embracing power in the fore-front of life and asks, not for toleration, but for domination."[27] He repeats the thought with more detail, showing wherein he considers the philosophy of St. Thomas insufficient for our time: "for his day Thomas was the leader of all Christendom, to-day he can be but the leader of a party."[28] Paulsen is similarly minded, for in the preface to his Philosophia Militans, he sets up the Philosophy of Kant as the true one, and says, Kant not only destroyed Materialism and Naturalism,

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[27] *Die Philosophie des Thomas von Aquino und die Cultur der Neuzeit*, *Zeitschr.* f. *philosophische Kritik*, vol. 87-88, p. 161.

[28] *Die Lebensansch.*, p. 249.

but likewise, "dogmatic Supernaturalism or Scholastic Metaphysics." We will end with a statement of Prof. Royce. His article already referred to is very appreciative of Scholasticism and St. Thomas, yet he thinks the fundamental positions of the Philosophy of Aquinas call for readjustment if they are to meet the modern view of these problems. To quote him on the two points that bear on our work. "His (Thomas') theory of the nature and limits of human knowledge, a theory derived from Aristotle, especially calls not merely for restatement, but for readjustment, as soon as you try to apply it to the interpretation of our modern consciousness." We shall state the theory of Aquinas in the following chapter, and try to show that it is still applicable.

The other point bears still more directly on the subject we are handling, so we shall cite it at length. "The problem of the relation between God and the world, as St. Thomas treats that topic, is one which has only to be reviewed carefully in the light of modern science and modern philosophy, to secure an alteration of the essentially unstable equilibrium in which Thomas left this heaven-piercing tower of his speculation. Here I, of course, have no space to speak of a philosophical problem to which as a student of philosophy I have directed so

much of my attention—namely, the problem about the conception of God. But when I read, in more than one recent philosophical essay of Catholic origin, expressions that admit the decidedly symbolic and human character of the language in which even the dogmas of the Church have to be expressed so far as they relate to the nature of God, when stress is also laid, very rightly, upon that aspect of St. Thomas' teaching which emphasizes this very inadequacy of even the traditional formulas to the business of defining divine things, when I meet at the same time with admissions that St. Thomas' positive theory of the divine attributes involves these or these apparent contradictions, which still need philosophical solution—then, indeed, I see not that our more modern thinking is wholly right and Thomas wrong—but that Catholic Theology is nowadays in a position where it is bound either to progress, or to abandon the whole business of reviving the spirit of serious philosophical thinking, so that they like the rest of us are living in an age of transition."

These are but a few of the statements of the many that might be cited—Froschammer, Hermes, Günther, and others might be quoted. We hope to show in this study that the estimates given against the value of the view

of St. Thomas are incorrect, and that the treatment of the question of God by Aquinas—a question of prime importance with him and all philosophy—is not a thing of the past.

CHAPTER I.

THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE.

SECTION I.—GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF KNOWLEDGE.

Knowledge is a fact. What is the process of knowledge, and what is the value of knowledge, are the important considerations. What makes a thing knowable, how do we know it, and what is the validity of our knowledge? An answer to these questions gives the psychology and epistemology of knowledge. There is a sentence in one of the works of Aquinas that contains the factors involved in the problem of knowledge. "There are", says he, "but three requisites for knowledge, namely, the active power of the knower by which he judges of things, the thing known, and the union of both."[1] Before we can have knowledge, there must be something knowable, some one capable of knowing, and both the knowable object and the knowing subject must come into some union or relation. Knowledge is only realized

[1] *De Veri.*, q. 2, a. 1, praeterea.

when the object and the subject enter into a determined relation. These elements are admitted by all philosophers as necessary for a theory of knowledge. We shall now consider their organic connection in the theory of St. Thomas, and also the objective value of our knowledge as resulting from this theory.

It is a Scholastic axiom that all knowledge or every cognition is in the knower through an assimilation of the knower to the known.[2] The nature of this assimilation and how it is brought about forms the problem of knowledge for the Scholastics. This assimilation runs through all knowledge and is its basis. There are two sorts of knowledge distinct in kind—sensory and intellectual. From the external senses that receive the forms of material things, without matter indeed, but yet with many material conditions, up through the internal senses which retain and combine the images of these forms, the human intellect, the angelic intellect, the Divine intellect, there is a steady rise and the attainment of more perfect knowledge on the *basis of immateriality*. The assimilation or likeness that is brought about between the knowing power and the object is not simply according to the nature of the object

[2] Omnis cognitio fit per assimilationem cognoscentis et cogniti. *C. G.*, l. 1., c. 65.

in itself, but rather according to the nature of the knowing faculty. Hence the object is in the knower not according to its natural form as it exists in its real being, but through a representative form, through a form which the Scholastics called *intentional*. This representative or intentional form was also known to them as *species*. The species in itself, as an entity, agrees in nature with the power in which it is, in representing it agrees with the object it stands for. It is sensible or intellectual (species sensibilis, species intelligibilis) according to the knowing faculty—senses or intellect. "For sensible vision as well as for intellectual, two things are required, viz., the power of vision and the union of the seen with the one who sees. For there is no actual vision except the things seen be in some way in the one seeing."[3] This cognitive assimilation further demands from the object to be known some degree of immateriality, for the concept of knowledge and the concept of materiality are opposites.[4]

This is a brief statement of the question of

[3] Ad visionem tam sensibilem quam intellectualem duo requiruntur; scilicet, virtus visiva, et unio rei visae cum visu. Non enim fit visio in actu, nisi per hoc quod res visa quodammodo est in videnti. *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 12, a. 2.

[4] Ratio cognitionis ex opposito se habet ad rationem materialitatis. *De Veri.*, q. 2.

knowledge as set forth by St. Thomas. It can be reduced to three fundmenial principles, that we shall examine in detail, and thus arrive at a clearer view of the psychology of this system and the critical value given it by Aquinas.

These principles are: First, knowledge is the result of the union of the subject and object; second, the object known is in the knowing subject according to the nature of the knower; third, the perfection of knowledge is in proportion to the immateriality of the knowing subject. In other words, the essence of knowledge consists in the intrinsic presence of the object in the knower in such a way that the knower is aware of it, and this recognition is due to an act that contains in itself the object as a known terminus. In knowledge the knowing subject and the known object must be one; this unity is attained by an *assimilation* based on *immateriality*. The words unity, assimilation, immateriality, comprise the whole question.

The truth of the first principle is beyond doubt, if we do not seek to determine the nature and origin of this resemblance or assimilation. It is a fact that we possess knowledge, and it is equally clear that we have not the object according to its natural or physical being, for the nature of the knowing power forbids this—hence there must be some means by which the object is made

knowable and the union between the knower and the known takes place. This assimilation or union is of the essence of knowledge; the object must be in the knower in such a way that it makes the subject know the object, and this is what is meant by saying that it is in the knower representatively. There is a two-fold similitude or likeness: there is one according to the nature of things and there is a representative one. This latter "likeness of the knower to the known is required for knowledge."[5] The subject and the object concur in one common action—the known object must be present to the knowing subject, according to the nature of the knowing subject, and the knowing subject by its activity must respond to the specific determination of the object.[6]

The part of the object in this union is to determine the knowing faculty which of itself is indifferent and indeterminate;[7] and this deter-

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[5] This representative likeness is the same as image, for it implies some imitative reproduction of another thing, of the object to be known.

[6] The unity of action in knowledge is due to two co-principles. On the side of the subject, there is no complete act without the co-operation of the object, and the object is incapable of effecting a complete act without the work of the subject.

[7] Sic etiam intellectus, si haberet aliquam naturam determinatam, illa natura connaturalis sibi prohibet eum a cognitione aliarum naturarum. De Anima, 1. 3, lect. 7. The soul is *quodammodo omnia.*

mination is brought about, as noted above, by some representative presence of the object, which the Scholastics called by the special name of *species*. This species is synonymous with the words *forma* and *similitudo*, and is a special determination coming from the object by which the subject is aroused and directed to know the object itself. When the mind is not engaged in any actual cognition, it is inactive and indetermined; the object acting on the mind determines the mind to know it. The element by which the object is in connection with the subject, which is its substitute, is called by the Scholastics *species impressa*; excited by this determination the mind acts, and the result is given in the *species expressa* by which the mind knows the object.

This word species is of constant occurrence in the Scholastic theory of knowledge, so an understanding of it will obviate misinterpretations, and will likewise simplify the problem as presented in these terms. It is hardly necessary to say that the word species has no community of doctrine with the floating images of Democritus and Epicurus which Aristotle rejected, and which is not to be found in the best Scholastic writ-

ings.[8] The true meaning is simply this: the mind is affected or modified by objects acting on the knowing power, sense-organ or intellect. The mind is in a peculiar attitude or modified to perceive an object, The species has no independent existence, but is bound up with the state or condition of the mind viewed at the time of cognition; it is due to the action of objects on sense-organs or intellect. There are no pre-existing species, for the "knowing soul is in potentia to the species which are the principles of sensation, as well as to the species which are the principles of intellection...In the beginning, it is in potentia to all the species by which it understands."[9] It is the condition by which activity-sensory and

[8] Though so recent an article as that of Dr. Lindsay, already referred to, has the following misconception of species: "Both Thomas and Duns Scotus held, each in his own way, to the doctrine of intelligible species, by which a copy of the object was supposed, in the process of knowledge, to arise and be seen by the soul." "In their doctrine of the "*species intelligibiles*" the two "Realists," Thomas and Duns Scotus, had alike followed, through some variations, the old Greek idea, that in the knowing process, by means of the cooperation of the soul and the external object, a copy of the latter arises, which is then apprehended and beheld by the soul." Windeband, *A Hist. of Phil.* p. 325. This thought is quoted by Ladd in a note of his *Phil.* of *Knowledge*, p. 53.

[9] Anima cognoscitiva sit in potentia tam ad similitudines quae sunt principia sentiendi, quam ad similitudines quae sunt principia intelligendi. . . Est in principio in potentia ad hujusmodi species omnes. *Sum, Theol.*, I. q. 84, a 3.

intellectual, is actualized. The intellect is actually intelligent through the intelligible species, as the sense is actual through the sensible species.[10] "The intelligible species is the formal principle of intellectual operation, as the form of any agent is the form of its specific operation." Through it the object becomes known. The mind does not perceive it primarily, but it is the means of perception—"that which is understood is the very concept of things existing outside the mind."[11] It is the object that is understood, but by means of the species. "The intelligible species is not that which is understood but that by which the intellect understands."[12] The object is not inferred from the species, as though it were an intermediate representation, but the species is simply the means that brings about the union of subject and object resulting in knowledge.

The species expressa was sometimes called *intentio*. Very often this word was made an adjective—intentionalis—in conjunction with species. This intentio in us is "neither the thing itself which is understood, nor is it the very

[10] Species intelligibilis se habet ad intellectum sicut species sensibilis ad sensum. *Ibid.*, 2. 85, a 2. There is a parallel between both species.

[11] Id vero quod intelligitur est ipsa ratio rerum existentium extra animam. *C. G.*, 1. 2, c. 75.

[12] Species intelligibilis non est id quod intelligitur, sed id quo intelligit intellectus. *Sum. Theol.*, I. q. 85, a. 2.

substance of the intellect, but it is a certain likeness conceived in the intellect of the thing that is understood."[13] It was also known in intellectual knowledge as *verbum mentale*. It is the terminus of the intellectual activity aroused by the intelligible species. This word intentional was used to show in what way the object was present to the knowing subject, to show the nature of the resemblance between the knower and the known. It offsets the view that the object is present in knowledge in its real and physical being; it is present really, but not according to the condition in which it is found in nature. This leads us to our second principle: The object known is in the knower according to the nature of the knower.

We have now seen the meaning of the word species, and its fundamental importance in the Scholastic system. The first principle gives the nature of the species from the point of view of the object, as representative of the object; the second princple views the nature of the species from the standpoint of the subject, as it exists in the knower. It exists in the knower according to the nature of the knower.

The second principle strictly taken is but a

[13] Quae quidem in nobis neque est ipsa res quae intelligitur neque est ipsa substantia intellectus, sed est quaedam similitudo concepta intellectu de re intellecta. *C. G.*, 1. 4, c. 11.

corollary of the first rightly understood, for if knowledge is but the union of the subject and the object, both must be of the same nature or reduced to it before the union can be effected. "All knowledge is according to some form, which is the principle of knowledge in the knower. This form or species can be viewed in a twofold light: in its relation to the knowing subject, and also in its relation to the object whose likeness it is. In the former it arouses the knowing faculty to cognitive activity, and in the latter it points out a definite object of knowledge. Hence the manner of knowing a thing is according to the condition of the knower, in whom the form is received according to his nature. But it is not necessary that the thing known exist according to the nature of the knower or according to that manner by which the form, which is the principle of knowing, has existence in the knower."[14] The manner of knowing must be that of the knower, but

[14] Omnis cognitio est secundum aliquam formam, quae est in cognoscente principium cognitionis. Forma autem hujusmodi potest considerari dupliciter: uno modo secundum esse, quod habet in cognoscente, alio modo secundum respectum quem habet ad rem, cujus est similitudo. Secundum quidem primum respectum facit cognoscentem actu cognoscere; sed secundum secundum respectum determinat cognitionem ad aliquod cognoscibile determinatum. Et ideo modus cognoscendi rem aliquam est secundum conditionem cognoscentis, in quo forma recipitur secundum modum ejus. Non autem oportet ut res cognita sit quae est cognoscendi principium, habet esse in cognoscente. *De Veri.*, q. 10, a. 4.

the thing itself in rerum natura need not be one with this mode, for knowledge is not "by means of identity, but by means of a certain representation; whence it is not necessary that the nature of the knower and the known be the same."[15] This conformity of the subject and object is "not a likeness of conformity in nature but a likeness of representation only, as we are reminded of some man through a golden statue."[16] In fact, "the perfection of knowledge consists in this, that the thing be known to exist in that nature in which it is, and not that the nature of the thing known be in the knower."[17]

The truth of this principle is emphasized indirectly or negatively by St. Thomas when he criticises the views of those who went astray on this point. Some of the ancient philosophers misapplied the axiom—"like is known by like"—and landed in a position the extreme opposite of that held by Plato. They understood this principle to mean that the "soul which knows all things is naturally made up of all: earth

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[15] *De Veri.*, q. 2, a. 5, ad 7.

[16] Ad cognitionem non requiritur similitudo conformitatis in natura, sed similitudo repraesentationis tantum; sicut per statuam auream ducitur in cognitionem hominis. *De Veri.*, q. 2, a. 5, ad 5.

[17] *Ibid.*, ad 6.

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that it may know earth, fire to know fire, and so of the rest."[18] This of course would make the soul corporeal, since it knows corporeal things; in fact, it would make it a compound of all things since it can know all things, and not only made up of the elements these philosophers considered as contained in their first matter. If their interpretation of this principle were true, then the possibility and diversity of knowledge would be at an end.

St. Thomas likewise sets aside the theory of Plato regarding this principle. "Plato", he says, "seems to deviate from the truth in this matter, for since he considered all knowledge to take place by means of likeness, he believed that the form of the known is of necessity in the knower in that manner in which it is in the known."[19] This led Plato to conceive the independent reality of general concepts to bring about the requisite conditions for knowledge as they appeared to him; ideas and not corporeal things would be the object of our intellectual representations, according to Plato. This theory results in an arbitrary knowledge, neglecting

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[18] *Ibid.*, a. 2.

[19] Videtur autem in hoc Plato deviare a veritate, quia cum aestimaret omnem cognitionem per modum alicujus similitudinis esse credidit, quod forma cogniti ex necessitate sit similitudinis esse modo, quo est in cognito. *Sum. Theol.*, q. 84, a. 1.

things as they are and failing to account for our knowledge of corporeal things.

St. Thomas rejected these two views because they did not accord with what he conceived to be the basis of conformity between object and subject. His critical spirit is shown by his putting aside the Naturphilosophen and Plato, and embracing a principle contained in the book *De Causis*: That everything received is received according to the nature of the receiver.[20] This principle is important for the theory of knowledge, embracing as it does our second principle. We know the object directly, as noted before, and the object also has the prior activity in knowledge, yet it must adapt itself to the conditions of the knowing power. Subject and object must be so intimately connected as to form one sole principle of knowledge according to the axiom: *Ab utroque notitia paritur a cognoscente et cognito.* In this union the object comes under the conditions of the knowing power, for the object is knowable only when it has entered the field of consciousness by being assimilated by the subject.[21] This assimilation

[20] Omne quod recipitur in aliquo, est in eo per modum recipientis. *De Causis* is a work of Proclus the Platonist.

[21] This assimilation is a vital assimilation. In the cognitive life there is exactly the same process of assimilation as in the organic life, the process of nutrition; it is but a special and higher degree of assimilation.

makes it an integral part of the knowing power, and thus a partaker of its nature. The subject also is modified by the object to the extent, that it is knowing under this condition and for this object. From the psychological point of view this principle presents no great difficulties, but it is important in the question of the objectivity of knowledge.

The third principle flows easily from the two preceding. If knowledge depends on the assimilative union of object and subject, and if the object is known according to the nature of the knower, it follows readily that the knowableness of the object depends on its immateriality. "The concept of knowledge and the concept of materiality are opposites"; "the more immaterial things are, the more knowable they are."[22] "This principle or axiom is very important; in a way, it underlies the whole question of knowledge, it is the condition that makes a thing knowable, and makes knowledge the possession of a particular class of beings. Immateriality, in general, is the capacity a thing has to be itself and to become something else. In knowledge, the object must be immaterial in itself or else immaterialized, and the subject must be immaterial—the object is assimilated and the subject assimilates. This

[22] Secundum ordinem immaterialitatis in rebus, secundum hoc in eis natura cognitionis invenitur. *De Veri.*, q. 2, a. 2.

double aspect is brought out clearly by St. Thomas—immateriality on the part of object and subject. The distinction between a knowing being and one that does not know is based on immateriality. The non-knowing has simply the one form of its own being, whereas the knowing is capable of receiving the form of another thing, for the species or form of the known is in the one knowing. The non-knowing can be assimilated but cannot assimilate; the knowing has the power to assimilate and thus become more and more. Hence the nature of the non-knowing is more restricted and limited, whereas the knowing has greater amplitude and extension. It is for this reason Aristotle said the soul is *quodammodo omnia*. It is because of the universality of the knowing power, that matter, which is the principle of individuation and restricts the form to one condition or result, cannot be admitted into it; rather in proportion to the absence of materiality will the knowledge be the freer and more perfect.[23] If the soul were naturally determined in one direction, to one set of activities, all its operations would be influenced by this specific bent, just as all things taste bitter to an unhealthy tongue. The soul must then be capa-

[23] Quanto autem aliquid immaterialius habet formam rei cognitae, tanto perfectius cognoscit. *Sum. Theol.*, I., q. 84, a. 2.

ble of adjusting itself to receive the various cognitions we know it actually possesses, it must have in its nature none of those things it seeks to know and can know.[24]

St. Thomas has knowledge graded on the scale of immateriality—the knowableness of the object and the knowing capacity of the subject rest on the same basis. A thing is knowable in proportion to its immateriality, and a subject knows in proportion to the extent of the immateriality of its nature. There is a passage in the Summa Theologica, Part I, q. 84, a. 2, that brings out this fact clearly. Knowledge is per formam, and its concept is the opposite of the concept of materiality. When forms exist materially only—immersed in matter—there is no power of knowledge, as is the case in plants; but in proportion as the form of the thing is possessed more immaterially, the more perfect is the knowledge. Thus the intellect which has the form of the object freed from matter and all individuating conditions is more cognoscitive than the senses which possess the form, without matter it is true, yet with material conditions. Even among the senses themselves this principle is verified, for vision is the

[24] Quod autem potest cognoscere aliqua, oportet ut nihil eorum habeat in sua natura, quia illud quod inesset ei naturaliter, impediret cognitionem aliorum. *Ibid.*, q. 75, a. 2.

most cognoscitive because it is the least material; likewise among concepts the degree of immateriality regulates the degree of perfection. There is no break in the application of this axiom, it leads straight up to the highest knowable and the most perfectly knowing—God Himself. The idea of immateriality as here understood, contains the idea of activity; potentia and matter are pratically one and are the opposites of immateriality and actuality.[25] In God there is an utter absence of potentia and matter. He is characterized by the possession of their contraries, and thus he is especially knowable and knowing. "Since God, therefore, is the opposite extreme of matter, since He is entirely immune from all potentiality, it follows that He is especially knowable and especially knowing."[26]

There are objects that are immaterial in

[25] St. Thomas uses the phrase, *non enim cognoscitur aliquid secundum quod in potentia est, sed secundum quod est in actu*, very frequently. He uses this quality of actuality as a proof for the immateriality of the soul. "The species of material things as they are in themselves are not intelligible actu, because they are in matter. But as they are in the intellective human soul they are intelligible actu." Quodlibetum 3, a. 20.

[26] Quia Deus est in fine separationis a materia, cum ab omni potentialitate sit penitus immunis, relinquitur, quod ipse est maxime cognoscitivus et maxime cognoscibilis. *De Veri.*, q. 2, a. 2.

themselves and are knowable so far as they are concerned, and there are objects that do not possess this quality but must be brought to this condition before they are propria of the mind. God, the spirit world—including Angels and the souls of men, our own thoughts and the thoughts of others as thoughts, come under the first class; the second class embraces what we ordinarily understand by material objects. We shall take up the question of God shortly. That Angels come under this term is evident to all who accept the doctrine about Angels—"some essences are *sine materia* as separated substances which we call Angels."[27] The mind knows itself, and the content of the mind together with the mind itself is immaterial. From the fact that we perceive ourselves to understand we know that we have an intellectual soul, but to understand the nature of this soul there is need of a careful consideration—a *subtilis inquisitio*. In this latter quest many have erred through a misunderstanding of the principle—like is known by like. They perceived that they had a knowledge of material things and at once concluded that these objects were present to the soul materially, not recognizing that the concepts of knowledge and immaterial-

[27] *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 87, a. 1, ad 3.

ity are opposites. Plato, as St. Thomas notes, rightly conceived the soul to be immaterial and its knowledge to be likewise immaterial, but his explanation of this truth was not satisfactory. He introduced unnecessary elements to account for this doctrine; he did not give the intellect the power to render a material object immaterial, but held there were immaterial ideas independent of the object, and that it was these ideas or forms the mind knew. This theory is unlike that of St. Thomas, who says, "everything intelligible is immune from matter in se, or is abstracted from matter by the operation of the intellect,"[28] yet it is the actual recognition of immateriality as a requisite for knowableness.

The knowledge the soul has of itself emphasizes further this requisite of immateriality. St. Thomas holds that we have a two-fold knowledge of the soul—an actual and habitual one. We can simply know of its existence, and we can also know of its nature—two distinct points, "for many know they have a soul who do not know what the soul is,"[29] do not know its nature. The soul becomes aware of itself through its acts—"one perceives that he has a soul, and lives, and is, because he perceives

[28] *De Veri.*, q. 13, a. 3.
[29] *Ibid.*, q. 10, a. 9.

himself to feel and understand and to exercise the other functions of a life of this nature."[30] This reveals its existence; "what the nature of the mind itself is, the mind can only perceive from a consideration of its object."[31] From a knowledge of its object, the soul comes to know its own nature. "Our mind can not so understand itself that it can immediately apprehend itself, but from apprehending other things it comes to a knowledge of itself. . . From the fact that the human soul knows the universal natures of things, it perceives that the species by which we understand is immaterial; otherwise it would be individualized and thus never lead to a knowledge of the universal."[32] The soul

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[30] Aliquis percipit se animam habere et vivere et esse, quod percipit se sentire et intelligere et alia hujusmodi vitae opera exercere. *De Veri.*, q. 10, a. 8.

[31] *Ibid.*, q. 10, a. 8, ad 1.

St. Thomas appreciated the difficulty of arriving at a knowledge of the nature of the soul. "Each one experiences in himself that he has a soul and that the acts of the soul take place within him, but to know the *nature* of the soul is most difficult." *De Veri.*, q. 10, a. 8 ad 8. The same applies to our knowledge of the *nature* of God.

[32] Unde mens nostra non potest se ipsam intelligere, ita quod se ipsam immediate apprehendat; sed ex hoc quod apprehendit alia, devenit in suam cognitionem. . . Ex hoc enim quod species qua intelligimus est immaterialis; alias esset individuata, et sic non duceret in cognitionem universalis. *De Veri.*, q. 10, a. 8.

knows the universal, the proper object of the intellect is the essence of material things, this essence is immaterial, and the soul perceiving this immaterial essence recognizes its own immaterial nature, for operation follows being, the act is in accord with its source.

The idea running through these principles is —knowledge is a vital act, an assimilation of subject and object. The degree of activity regulates the degree of knowledge, of perfection; this goes on without a break until we reach the most perfect knowledge in God. Before we consider the knowableness of God, we must outline the factors involved in the activity of intellectual knowledge in man. "There is, therefore, a perfect and supreme grade of life, that of the intellect, for the intellect reflects upon itself and knows itself."[33] The human intellect though it can know itself, begins its knowledge with external things; it is inferior to the Angelic and Divine Intellects, but leads to a knowledge of them.

[33] Est igitur supremus et perfectus gradus vitae, qui est secundum intellectum; nam intellectus in seipsum reflectitur, et seipsum intelligere potest. *C. G.*, 1. 4, c. 11.

SECTION II.—THEORY OF INTELLECTUAL KNOWLEDGE.

There are two kinds of knowledge in man arising from two sets of cognitive activity—the sensory and the intellectual.[1] The latter is of especial importance in arriving at a knowledge of God, so we shall present the stages of intellectual knowledge as found in St. Thomas.

The human intellect is primarily and directly concerned with being in its widest acceptation. More specifically, it is busied with the essence of material things, the universal. This essence as it exists in material things is not in an immediate condition to be known, so there is a power, an intellectual activity, required to make it actually knowable or intelligible. This power is the *active intellect*, which by its abstractive power immaterializes the corporeal object and brings to light the intelligible species. This species is the likeness of the object in its specific nature; it makes the object actually intelligible and determines the intellect proper to know. This summary statement can now be viewed in its parts.

"What is primarily and per se known by a

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[1] Homo cognoscit diversis viribus cognoscitivis omnia rerum genera, intellectu quidem universalia et immaterialia, sensu singularia et corporalia. *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 57, a. 2.

cognitive power is its proper object."[2] "But being is primarily in the conception of the intellect, for everything is knowable in so far as it is actual. . . Whence being is the proper object of the intellect, and thus it is the first intelligible as sound is the first audible."[3] Being is here taken for actual and possible existence, "it comprehends all the differences and possible species of being, for whatever can exist can be understood."[4] As we are now constituted we are not concerned with all being directly, but with being as found in material things. "The first object of our intellect in our present existence is not being and true of any sort, but being and true viewed in material things, through which we come to a knowledge of all other things."[5] This passage contains the

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[2] Id quod est primo et per se cognitum a virtute cognoscitiva est proprium ejus objectum. *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 85, a. 7.

[3] Primo autem in conceptione intellectus est ens: quia secundum hoc unumquodque cognoscibile est, in quantum est actu. . . Unde ens est proprium objectum intellectus; et sic est primum intelligibile sicut sonus est primum audibile. *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 5, a. 2.

[4] Est enim proprium objectum intellectus ens intelligibile, quod quidem comprehendit omnes differentias et species entis possibililis; quidquid esse potest intelligi potest. *C. G.*, 1, 2. c. 98.

[5] Nec primum objectum intellectus nostri secundum praesentem statum est quodlibet ens et verum, sed ens et verum consideratum in rebus materialibus, ex quibus in cognitionem omnium aliorum devenit. *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 87, a. 3 ad 1.

fundamental and oft-repeated truth that we start from material things as a basis and rise gradually to our most immaterial and metaphysical concepts.[6]

The specific or connatural object of the intellect is then the essence of material things. "Through the intellect it is connatural to us to know natures that exist only in individual matter, but not as they are in individual matter but as they are abstracted from it by intellectual consideration. Thus the intellect enables us to know things of this nature as universal. And this is beyond the power of the senses."[7] The intellect deals with the universal which, however, is found in sensible objects, and this power makes it superior to the senses. "Sensitive cognition is occupied with external, sensible qualities, but intellectual knowledge

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[6] Proprium autem intellectus est quidquid est in substantia rei. Igitur quidquid intellectus de aliqua re cognoscit, cognoscit per cognitionem substantiae illius rei. . . Cognitio intellectus oritur a sensu. . . Quidquid igitur est in re, quod non potest cognosci per cognitionem substantiae ejus, oportet esse intellectui ignotum. *C. G.*, l. 3, c. 56.

[7] Unde per intellectum connaturale est nobis cognoscere naturas quae quidem non habent esse nisi in materia individuali; non tamen secundum quod sunt in materia individuali; sed secundum quod abstrahuntur ab ea per considerationem intellectus. Unde secundum intellectum possumus cognoscere hujusmodi res in universali; quod est supra facultatem sensus. *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 12, a. 4.

penetrates to the very essence of the thing, for the object of the intellect is the quiddity of a thing."[8] "The proper object proportioned to our intellect is the nature of a sensible thing."[9] This principle rests upon the very nature of man, his relation to matter. The knowable object is proportionate to the knowing power. This power varies according to its connection with matter. Man makes use of a bodily organ in knowing, thus he knows matter, but only what is essential to it reaches his intellect as its proper concept. Essence is intelligible for us only in so far as it is actualized, and it is actualized only in material things. Our mind has a natural tendency to know the intelligible essence, but it reaches it only through sensuous images. "Operation is proportioned to power and essence, but the intellectual in man rests on the sensitive, and thence its proper operation is to understand the intelligible in the phantasmata (images)."[10]

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[8] Cognitio sensitiva occupatur circa qualitates sensibiles exterioris, cognitio autem intellectiva penetrat usque ad essentiam rei; objectum enim intellectus est quod quid est. *Sum. Theol.*, 22ª, q. 8, a. 1.

[9] Proprium objectum intellectui nostro proportionatum, est natura rei sensibilis. *Ibid.*, I, q. 84, a. 7.

[10] Operatio proportionatur virtuti et essentiae; intellectivum autem hominis est in sensitivo et ideo propria ejus est intelligere intelligibilia in phantasmatibus. *De Memoria et Reminiscentia*, lect. 4.

How is the mind to get at the universal, the intelligible in things, for this is its object. This question is answered by the theory of abstraction. The mind possesses a power called *active intellect* by which it brings in evidence the universal or the intelligible in the thing considered. The existence of such a power, its relation to what is called the passive intellect, its function, and the result of its operation, are all clearly set forth by St. Thomas.

Nothing is changed from the potential to the actual save through something that is actual. Intelligibility requires the object to be actual, individualizing matter is opposed to this knowableness, thus there must be an activity in the mind to draw from material things the essence they contain. This is the active intellect. If universals had an existence independent of matter, as Plato held, then this power would be unnecessary, for its sole purpose is to make actually intelligible the universal existing in material things. This power is then dependent on the doctrine that universals have a *fundamentum in re*, in things themselves, and must be abstracted before they can become propria of the mind. This power is so necessary that "without it man can understand nothing."[11] Yet

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[11] *De Veri.*, q. 1, a. 1 ad 3.

it is not of such a nature as to constitute what we might call a distinct mind; it is rather closely associated with the passive intellect. The latter is the intellectual faculty proper—"the passive intellect is that by which man formally understands,"[12]—the former is intellectual activity. They are distinct in the sense that we can ascribe different operations to them, but not in the sense of radical separation and totally independent action. "In every act by which man understands, there is the concurrent operation of both active and passive intellects."[13]

The basis for the distinction between these two powers rests on the relation of potency and act in general.[14] The mind is viewed as a passive power, immaterial and destined to know

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[12] *De Anima*, l. 3, lect 7.

[13] In omni actu quo homo intelligit, concurrit operatio intellectus agentis et intellectus possibilis *De Mente*, a. 8, ad 11. Ladd's statement that the power that apprehends the universal is an "intellective soul" is incorrect, and leads him to the following misconception: "This results in a division of the faculties of the soul, which is wholly inconsistent with his (Aquinas') maintenance elsewhere of the true view of the soul as one, but gifted with diverse energies." *Phil of Knowledge*, p. 53. St. Thomas never abandons the "true view of the soul as one, but gifted with diverse energies."

[14] "The active and passive intellects are diverse powers, as in all things there is an active and passive power." *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 79. a. 10. This is the fundamental thought in the Faculty Theory of the Scholastics; the principle itself is very extensive, operating throughout their whole system.

the intelligible, which must be immaterial and intelligible actu before it is an object of intellectual knowledge, "but the intelligible actu is not something existing in rerum natura,"[15] hence there is need of an active power in the mind to bring about this intelligibility and actually account for the knowledge we possess. "The act of the passive intellect is to *receive* the intelligible, the action or the active intellect is to *abstract* the intelligible."[16] In discussing the general principles of knowledge, we saw that there was both passivity and activity in the operation of knowing, that both subject and object played a part in effecting knowledge. Here we have the object in the phantasma or imagination acted upon by the active intellect and the result admitted by the passive intellect, as the intelligible in things. "The active intellect is a certain power of the soul extending itself actively to the same things to which the passive intellect extends itself receptively."[17] The former enables the soul to "do all things" (omnia

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[15] *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 79, a. 3 ad 3.

[16] Actus intellectus possibilis est recipere intelligibilia; actus intellectus agentis est abstrahere intelligibilia. Q. Dd., De Anima, a. 4 ad 7.

[17] Intellectus agens est. . virtus quaedam animae ad eadem active se extendens ad quae se extendit intellectus possibilis receptive. *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 88, a. 1.

facere), the latter to "become all things" (omnia fieri).

We have said that the purpose of this active intellect is to bring out for the mind the real object existing in material things, to abstract the universal from them. It is an abstractive power and exercises itself solely on the intelligible in sensible things. "Everything is understood in so far as it is abstracted from matter, because the forms in matter are individual forms which the intellect does not apprehend as such."[18] To abstract is to know a thing existing individually in corporeal matter, but not in the manner in which it there exists. "To know what is in such individual matter, but not as it is in such matter, is to abstract the form from individual matter."[19] Knowledge proceeds from the more indeterminate to the less indeterminate, from the imperfect to the perfect, because the intellect is concerned with the universal in the individual. It knows the essence at once as constituent of the thing, and later on by reflection as applicable to

[18] Unumquodque intelligitur in quantum a materia abstrahitur; quia formae in materia sunt individualis formae quas intellectus non apprehendit secundum quod hujusmodi. *Ibid.*, I, q. 50, a. 2.

[19] Cognoscere vero id quod est in materia individuali, non prout est in tali materia, est abstrahere formam a materia individuali. *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 85, a. 1.

many others. The universal is not the result of a comparison between many objects in the sense of the Empiricists, and then recognized as universal because found in many or all, nor is the particular or individual known first by the intellect and then the universal.

The active intellect abstracts the universal from the image in the imagination or phantasia.[20] The image is the instrumental cause in the process, the active intellect is the principal cause. The result partakes of the nature of both causes. Its relation to the image makes it the representation of a specific object, its relation to the active intellect makes it immaterial in nature. We have finally the intelligible species produced in the passive intellect. Sensation from which our knowledge takes its rise is not the full explanation of the universal—"sensitive cognition is not the total cause of intellectual cognition."[21] Abstraction or the operation of the active intellect simply brings out the universal existing in the given individual object. "One and the same nature which was singular and made

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[20] The phantasia for the Scholastics was the faculty that retained the images of absent objects. It is now known as retentive memory.

[21] Sensitiva cognitio non est tota causa intellectualis cognitionis. *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 84, a. 6.

individual in each man through matter, afterwards becomes universal through the action of the intellect refining it from individuating conditions.[22]

The active intellect is said to *illumine* the phantasma, and thus render it fit to arouse the passive intellect to an act of knowledge. Though the phantasmata or images of themselves cannot act on the intellect because they are individual and exist in corporeal organs, yet since they are in the soul which is intellective, they have a special aptitude to become known to the passive intellect through the operation of the active intellect. As the senses receive greater power from their connection with the intellect, so the phantasmata by the power of the active intellect are put in a condition from which the intelligible species can be readily abstracted. This illumination is simply the action of the active intellect, for the latter is not supposed "to imprint anything on the phantasma, but in union with the phantasma it produces the intelligible species in the passive intellect."[23]

[22] Una et eadem natura, quae singularis erat et individuata per materiam in singularibus hominibus, efficitur postea universalis per actionem intellectus depurantis ipsam a conditionibus quae sunt hic et nunc. *De Universalibus*..

[23] The Commentary of the Conimbricenses, *De Anima*, 1. 3, c. 5, q. 1, a. 3 ad 1.

The result of the operation of the active intellect is the intelligible species, which is immaterial and represents the thing in its specific nature abstracted from the material object. "What pertains to the specific concept of any material thing, as stone, or man, or horse, can be considered without the individual principles which are not of the concept of the species. And this is to abstract the universal from the particular or the intelligible species from the phantasmata, namely, to consider the nature of the species without considering the individual principles which are represented through the phantasmata."[24] The intelligible species is received in the passive intellect and determines it to know. The intellect is passive, as we have seen, but when stimulated to understand, it is active. What produces the action is related to the intellect as its form, for form is that by which an agent acts. This form is the intelligible species, the intellectual representation of the object known. We might recall

[24] Ea quae pertinent ad rationem speciei cujuslibet rei materialis, puta lapidis, aut hominiis, aut equi, possunt considerari sine principiis individualibus, quae non sunt de ratione speciei. Et hoc est abstrahere universale a particulari, vel speciem intelligibilem a phantasmatibus, considerari scilicet naturam speciei aliaque consideratione individualium principiorum, quae per phantasmata repraesentantur. *Sum. Theol.*, 1, q. 85, a. 1 ad 1.

here that it is not the species that is known primarily by the mind, but the object it represents; and moreover, the species is of the nature of the knower, and hence does not agree in nature with the physical being of the object. The last stage of the act of knowledge is the mental word, the recognition of the object and the internal expression of this recognition, and this word is "neither the thing itself which is understood, nor is it the very substance of the intellect, but it is a certain likeness conceived in the intellect of the thing which is understood,"[25] and by which we understand the object. This connects us at once with what St. Thomas has to say about the Validity of our Knowledge.

SECTION III.—VALIDITY OF KNOWLEDGE.

It is evident from the discussion of the general principles of knowledge, and especially the process of intellectual knowledge, that the question of validity is practically taken for granted in the system of our author; it is an undercurrent directing and determining the statements and developments of knowledge in its various stages as set forth by Aquinas in detail. The reality of the object, of the external

[25] *C. G.*, 1. 4, c. 11.

world, is rooted in the fundamental statements of knowledge thus far expressed. The union of subject and object, the manner in which the object is present to the knower, the intellectual process that gives birth to the intelligible in sensible objects, all look to something *extra animam*—"the act of knowledge extends itself to those things which are outside the knower, for we also know those things which are external to us."[1] According to Gardair, "St. Thomas seems to regard as indubitable the prime veracity of the senses rather than to demonstrate it."[2] Farges is in accord with this view. "The great Doctors of the Middle Ages believed in the immediate perception of bodies by the external senses as a primitive fact clearly attested by the consciousness of each man."[3] These statements become general when we recall that for Aquinas all knowledge takes its rise in the senses, according to the axiom: *Nihil est in*

[1] Actus cognitionis se extendit ad ea quae sunt extra cognoscentem. Cognoscimus enim etiam ea quae extra nos sunt. *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 84, a. 2.

[2] L'Objectivite de la Sensation, *Annales de Phil. Chretienne*, 1895, p. 17.

[3] Theorie de la Perception Immediate d'apres Aristote et St. Thomas. *Ibid.*, 1891, p. 441.

intellectu quod prius non fuerit in sensu.[4]

A few sentences will suffice to confirm the above view. First, as regards the senses. "The sense is a certain passive power capable of being changed by an external sensible object."[5] "The sense always apprehends the the thing as it is, except there be an impediment in the organ or in the medium."[6] Because "sensible objects exist actually outside the soul,"[7] there is no need of an active sense corresponding to the active intellect. We have

[4] It is true to say as Ladd does—with St. Thomas "the psychological inquiry as to the nature, results, and certainty of its (the intellect) functioning is thus made the most important of epistemological inquiries." But his understanding of this product is inadequate, as his conclusion evidences—"with such views of the origin of knowledge as the foregoing, the validating of knowledge becomes a hopeless puzzle. *Phil. of Knowledge*, p. 53 That there is no inconsistency between the psychology of knowledge and the epistemology of knowledge as treated by St. Thomas, will be clear, we think, from an exposition of his views. "The theories of validity ought to correspond to the theories of origin: It is thus—Nominalism, Conceptualism and Realism correspond perfectly to Sensism, Innatism, and Peripateticism. Peillaube, *Theorie des Concepts*, p 347.

[5] Est autem sensus quaedam potentia passiva, quae nata est immutari ab exteriori sensibili. *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 78, a. 3.

[6] Sensus semper apprehendit rem ut est, nisi sit impedimentum in organo, vel in medio. *De Veri.*, q. 1, a. 11.

[7] *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 79, a. 3 ad 1.

seen that all knowledge is by species and that the species is only the means of knowledge; what is primarily and immediately and actually known is the object the species represents. Moreover, both powers of cognition—sense and intellect—are passive and must be acted upon by the objects, to which they add nothing and from which they take nothing, before there is knowledge. This double phase of activity and passivity in knowledge, presupposes external reality. This is expressed in a statement of A. Seth: "Knowledge is an activity, an activo-passive experience of the subject, whereby it becomes aware of what is not itself."[8]

We need say little about the reality contained in intellectual knowledge, for though this knowledge is distinct in kind from sensory, yet it rests on sensitive images as a basis, and the whole process of the active intellect is concerned with extracting the intelligible, the essence, wrapped up in the image, which is the proper object of the intellect. There is a twofold aspect of the operation of knowing in man, one wholly internal and another that has as its terminus "something existing outside him,"[9] an external object. "The first object of the human intel-

[8] The Problem of Epistemology, *Phil. Review*, vol. 1, p. 513.

[9] *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 14, a. 2.

lect is not its own essence, but something external, namely, the nature of a material thing. Hence what is primarily known by the intellect is an object of this nature, and secondarily, the act by which the object is known."[10] To multiply quotations would be useless and would largely repeat what was said when speaking of intellectual knowledge.

We can then say we know the object, we know it as something external, and we know it at once. The perception of reality is not the result of an *inference* as Descartes and many moderns hold, but the idea represents the object at once without any intermediate presentations. But how does the idea make the object known to us? What does it *mean*? The idea is a state of the mind, and it is also *representative* of *something*. In this second, its epistemological aspect, as representative of something, what is its value? Seth admits the twofold aspect of the idea and yet holds: "Immediacy

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[10] Nec sui intelligere est objectum primum ipsa ejus essentia. sed aliquid extrinsecum, scilicet natura materialis rei. Et ideo id quod primo cognoscitur ab intellectu humano, est hujusmodi objectum; et secundario cognoscitur ipse actus, quo cognoscitur objectum. *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 87, a. 3. This statement is exactly the opposite of the view held by Descartes and many modern psychologists, for whom the sensation is the only and the first immediate object of perception.

must be given up before any tenable theory of perception and any philosophical doctrine of Realism can be established."[11] St. Thomas maintains that the idea as representation, or, to make the statement general, the species which is the likeness or representation of the thing makes the thing itself known at once. If we hold with Berkeley that an idea can only be like an idea, we are shut off from a knowledge of the real existence of things material. The idea as an idea, as a state in the mind, of course, can only be like another idea, but when we recognize that "knowledge means nothing if it does not mean the relation of two factors, knowledge *of* an object *by* a subject,"[12] and "that we are never restricted to our own idea as ideas; from the first dawn of knowledge we treat the subjective excitation as the symbol or revealer to us of a real world,"[13] we see the aspect of the idea that looks toward something other than its presence as a mere mental state. It is only a question of what this *something other is*. And here we meet the second general principle of knowledge —the object is known according to the nature of the knower—from the critical point of view.

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[11] *Loc. cit.*, p. 515.

[12] A. Seth, *loc. cit.*, p. 513.

[13] A. Seth, *Scottish Philosophy*, p. 103

In the system of St. Thomas the answer to the something other is at hand: the idea represents to the subject some real object that is known immediately by means of the idea, but known according to the nature of the knower. The fact that everything the subject knows he knows according to his nature, renders the objections usually made on the score of incompatibility of the nature of the knowing subject with certain objects that we say we do know, of little or no consequence; for though the intellectual idea as such is wholly immaterial, yet the image from which it has been derived is material, and the idea is simply the image considered in an immaterial way, namely, the essence freed from material conditions.[14]

The real difficulty from the modern point of view is to explain how the species represents the thing in itself, since the species is in the

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[14] Quae (anima) tamen habet duas virtutes cognoscitivas. Unam, quae est actus alicujus corporei organi; et huic connaturale est cognoscere res secundum quod sunt in materia individuali; unde sensus non cognoscit nisi singularia. Alia vero virtus cognoscitiva ejus est intellectus, qui non est actus alicujus organi corporalis. Unde per intellectum connaturale est nobis cognoscere naturas, quae quidem non habent esse nisi in materia individuali rei, non tamen secundum quod sunt in materia individuali, sed secundum quod abstrahuntur ab ea per considerationem intellectus. *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 14, a. 4. The close connection between the material image and the immaterial idea is here indicated.

knower according to the nature of the knower. Kant admits a relation between the subject and the object, but this relation is based upon an adaptation of the object to the subject, which imposes on the object its forms, categories, or ideas; we know appearances, phenomena only; all knowledge is purely subjective due to internal elements, and hence a real knowledge of the nature of things is excluded, things in themselves cannot be known. For St. Thomas, there is also a relation between the subject and the object, but this relation is based on the *natural proportion*, though relative, of the object and the subject. This idea of a natural proportion is a fruitful and satisfying one in the system of Aquinas. When we consider that knowledge is a fact, and subject and object are brought in presence of each other in some way, the first natural suggestion seems to be, the subject and the object must be related to each other in a way that will account for this knowledge, there must be a proportion between them that will enable us to resolve their connection if we go to work with the data on hand. It is not a great concession to admit with Dogmatism the reliability of our faculties in the quest of truth, and on this basis to account for the facts we

possess; it is, on the contrary, rather difficult to see the wisdom of any other proceeding.[15]

The definition of truth adopted by St. Thomas is familiar—*adaequatio rei et intellectus*.[16] Strictly, this adequation is only found in the Divine Mind, for God alone knows things as completely as they are knowable, since their truth depends on His Ideas. Things are measured by the Divine Ideas, whereas our ideas are measured by the things. Hence we simply have a proportional or relative knowledge of them, though it is true as far as it goes.[17] A faculty in normal condition, operating upon reliable data, always leads to truth. Each faculty has a specific portion of reality about which it is especially concerned, and when limited to this sphere it never gives a false report: "if the faculty is present, its judgment about its proper object will never be at

[15] To all appearances, the objection so commonly urged against the proceeding of Kant as involving a vicious circle or leading to a contradiction, is well grounded. He seeks to prove that our faculties are incapable of arriving at truth, and in doing so uses the very faculties he has called in question.

[16] Per conformitatem intellectus et rei, veritas definitur. *Sum. Theol*, I, q. 16, a. 2.

[17] Res naturales, ex quibus intellectus noster scientiam accipit, mensurant intellectum nostrum: sed sunt mensuratae a intellectu divino, in quo sunt omnia creata, sicut omnia artificiata intellectu artificis. *De Veri.*, q. 1, a. 2.

fault."[18] In sensitive knowledge the sense is always true when busied with its specific object—sight in case of color, hearing for sound, and the like, unless it is impeded in its normal action. Moreover, it seizes the object as it is. "The sense always apprehends the thing as it is, unless there is an impediment in the organ or in the medium. The sense is not the *dominus* of falsity, but the imagination."[19] If there is error, it will be found in the imagination, which puts together the various elements that have come through the senses. The intellect works on this image, which represents an objective reality, and extracts the idea which will also be objective, since it is the deliverance of the image. The intellect can never be deceived about the essence, simply considered as apprehended, for this is its specific object; but error may arise in the further processes of judgment and reasoning, owing to faulty proceeding. "The specific object of the intellect is

[18] Ad proprium objectum unaquaeque potentia per se ordinatur secundum quod ipsa: quae autem sunt hujusmodi, semper eodem modo se habent. Unde manente potentia non deficit ejus judicium circa proprium objectum. *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 85, a. 6.

[19] Sensus semper apprehendit rem ut est, nisi sit impedimentum in organo, vel in medio. Sensus non est dominus falsitatis, sed phantasia. *De Veri.*, q. 1, a. 11.

the essence of a thing. Whence properly speaking, the intellect is never deceived about the quiddity of a thing, but it may be deceived about matters connected with the essence or quiddity while it relates one thing to another by judgment or ratiocination."[20] Truth or error is found, strictly, in the affirmation or negation of the judgment—in the *componendo et dividendo* of Aquinas—and in the reasoning based on these judgments. "In the intellect, truth and falsity are primarily and principally found in the judgment of the one who affirms or denies."[21] The judgment and subsequent reasoning are true and have objective value if not impeded in their normal action, for they rest, through the idea, the image, the sense, on the reality of the object itself.[22]

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[20] Objectum autem proprium intellectus est quidditas rei. Unde circa quidditatem per se loquendo intellectus non fallitur, sed circa ea, quae circumstant rei essentiam vel quidditatem, intellectus potest falli, dum unum ordinet ad alterum vel componendo vel etiam ratiocinando. *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 85, a. 6.

[21] In intellectu autem primo et principaliter inveniuntur falsitas et veritas in judicio componentis et dividentis. *De Veri.*, q. 1, a. 11.

[22] It is not surprising that this conformity or proportion should exist between things and the human mind, when we recall, that, according to Aquinas, God is the author of both. They are the expressions of His Ideas, and in His Mind there is the most complete unity and harmony. "In Deo autem tota plenitudo intellectualis cognitionis continetur in uno." *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 55, a. 3.

The idea, however, has certain qualities that are not found in the image that gave rise to it. The thing represented by the idea, the essence—is endowed with conditions of necessity and universality, whereas the image is contingent and particular. Whence does the idea derive these attributes? Are they given in the representation of the object or are they simply due to the intelligence itself operating on the object, impressing a part of its substance on the object? This recalls the Controversy about the Universals, and the Critical Theory of Kant. The position of St. Thomas—that of Moderate Realism—is well known. For him, the universal did not exist separate from the object as Plato held, nor was it simply a name with no corresponding reality as Nominalism maintained, but it was the result of mind and object. It existed in the mind but had its basis in the thing. "There is a threefold diversity of objects signified by names. There are some which, according to their whole being, complete in themselves, are *extra animam*, as man, stone. There some that have no extra-mental existence, as dreams and chimerical images. There are some that have a *fundamentum in re extra animam*, but their formal completion is due to mental activity, as is the case with the

universal." The universal is the result of the action of the mind, but it has its basis in the object. "Humanity is something *in re*, yet as there found it is not the formal concept of the universal, since *extra animam* there is no humanity common to many. . . I say the same of truth, because it has a *fundamentum in re*, but its concept is completed through the action of the intellect when, namely, it is apprehended in the manner in which it is."[23] The active intellect abstracts the universal from the mental image and gives it the final character of universality which existed but in germ, in potency, in the singular, contingent image. "It is the theory of the Active Intellect which solves the question so often agitated by modern philosophers: Whence comes it

[23] Eorum, quae significantur nominibus, invenitur triplex diversitas. Quaedam enim sunt, quae secundum esse totum completum sunt extra animam, et hujusmodi sunt entia completa, sicut homo, lapis. Quae autem sunt, quae nihil habent extra animam, sicut somnia et imaginatio chimerae. Quaedam autem sunt, quae habent fundamentum in re extra animam; sed complementum rationis eorum, quantum ad id, quod est formale, est per operationem animae, ut patet in universali. Humanitas enim est aliquid in re, non tamen ibi habet rationem universalis cum non sit extra animam aliqua humanitas multis communis. Similiter dico de veritate, quod habet fundamentum in re, sed ratio ejus completur per actionem intellectus, quando scilicet apprehenditur eo modo quo est. *Com. on Lomb.*, I, *Dis.* 19, q. 5, a. 1.

that the laws of reason accord with the laws of nature."[24] The thought contained in the idea results from the presence of the image acted upon by the intellect, the image is the outcome of the deliverance of the sense, which in turn connects with external reality. So fundamentally, the external object is found in the highest operation of the intellect, for we can trace the object through the various stages that lead to the final act, and nowhere along the line of development are we made aware of any elements that come from a source other than the presence of the object in relation to the knowing faculty. For Kant, anything that is universal, necessary, is subjective, hence if we apply these qualities to ideas they can only have an internal significance, and do not relate us with objective reality as it is in itself. For St. Thomas, if we begin with the real—as we do in sensation—and proceed logically with normal faculties, we end with the real; hence there is reality throughout the whole process of knowledge. We have already noted that all our ideas betray signs of their sensuous origin, for if a sense is wanting or injured the intellectual data that would result from it are absent; moreover, the image is also required when we wish to re-think

[24] Piat, *L'Intellect Actif*, p. 181.

what we have already thought about or known. This is further emphasized in our knowledge of immaterial beings, as of God; for we can know an object separated from all materiality only by analogy of sensuous things or by notions derived from them.

The consequence of Kant's view on the question of the vaildity of our knowledge in contrast to that of Aquinas is found in the Relativity of Knowledge advocated by Hamilton and Spencer, and in the position of J. S. Mill, who also allies himself closely with Hume. What then is the extent of our knowledge? How much of reality can we know, and do all men know the same amount?

We know the universal, the essence in the material object, not exhaustively, however, but in a proportionate way; that is, it is known by us in so far as our knowing power will permit us to know it—for the object is known according to the nature of the knower. Our make-up as man necessitates a connection with matter that renders our knowledge dependent on it to such an extent as to exclude a perfect or complete grasp of the object itself. The thing to be known is the same for all men, but the intellectual state of the knower in the presence of the object depends upon his bodily condition and likewise on the good form of

the inferior powers of knowledge—sense and imagination—when the object was presented to them.[25] "The higher the intellect the more it knows, either a greater number of objects or at least more reasons for the same objects."[26] Again, "Some men can not grasp an intelligible truth unless it be explained to them part by part . . . others, who have a stronger intellect, can sieze much from few data."[27] All men, however, can know the object really, its essence,

[25] *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 85, a. 8. There is no separation of mind and matter in the system of Aquinas to the extent of an unbridgable chasm between them. Man is body and soul, and it is man that knows. The aberrations from this view from the time of Descartes are certainly instructive, and speak favorably for the doctrine that avoids all these apparent difficulties—such as psycho-physical parallelism is busied with—by interpreting faithfully the facts of consciousness. "If any degradation is suffered by my cognitive faculty in thus being dependent on the causal efficiency of these physico-chemical processes which is called 'my brain states', the remedy for this would seem to be in my not being an animal at all, rather than resorting to a theory which makes a complete breach between my mentality and my animality." Ladd, *Phil.* of *Knowledge*, p. 553.

[26] Quanto aliquis intellectus est altior, tanto plura cognoscit. vel secundum rerum multidudinem, vel saltem secundum earumdem rerum plures rationes. *C. G.*, 1. 3, c. 56.

[27] Sunt enim quidam qui veritatem intelligibilem capere non possunt, nisi eis particulatim per singula explicatur; et hoc ex debilitate intellectus eorum contingit. Alii vero sunt fortioris intellectus, ex paucis multa capere possunt. *Sum. Theol*, I, q 55, a. 3.

by a consideration of its *manifestations*. This is the important item in all knowledge, God not excepted, for if we can not know Him from what He manifests of Himself, then truly is knowledge of Him impossible. The causal idea here involved is at the basis of all validity of knowledge; it bears the whole burden of the knowableness of God in the system of St. Thomas, and will be considered at length shortly.

Hamilton justly argues that if we had more means of knowledge, had better faculties, we should know more and better, but his conclusion to absolute relativity of knowledge based on this lack of powers is unwarranted. "But were the number of our faculties coextensive with the modes of being—had we for each of these thousand modes a separate organ competent to make it known to us,—still would our whole knowledge be, as it is at present, only of the relative. Of existence absolutely and in itself, we should then be as ignorant as we are now."[28] This position is answered in the statement of Straub: "It is true that we do not attain to *all* that is or can be in *rerum natura*, by the senses, but it is one thing to say, what we seem to know in things is

[28] *Metaphysics*, v. 1, p. 153, lect. 9.

really in them, and it is quite another to contend, that we reach, by our knowledge, whatever is present in things."[29]

Spencer's conclusions to the relativity and inconceivability of what we are led to recognize as the legitimate outcome of our reasonings, rests on a misapprehension of the terms used. The statement of J. S. Mill: "Experience therefore affords no evidence, not even analogies, to justify our extending to the apparently immutable a generalization grounded only on our observation of the changeable",[30] is opposed to the view of Aquinas—"Through the active intellect we know immutable truth from mutable things, and we discern things themselves from their likenesses."[31] True objective reality and the principle of causality give us a reliable knowledge of things and allow us to arrive at an equally valid and non-relative view—always keeping in mind the limitations of our nature—of what really transcends the senses, and finally a view of the systematic relation of things. Ladd summarizes his chapter on

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[29] *De Objectivitate Cognitionis Humanae*, p. 39.

[30] *Essays on Religion.*

[31] Per quod (lumen intellectus agentis) immutabiliter veritatem in rebus mutabilibus cognoscamus, et discernamus ipsas res a similitudinibus rerum. *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 84, a. 6 ad 1.

Knowledge and Reality in these words: "All this amounts to saying that the very existence of our cognitive activities, and of the products which mark their development, whether for the individual or for the race, rests upon the general assumption that things and minds do so causally determine each other as to show that they belong to one system of Reality."[32] Reality in its various relations and interdependencies leads back to one author of all in whom we see the final and complete expression. This will come to light in the portion of the subject we are about to consider, where the principles we have just discussed will give us a knowledge of God, of whom St. Thomas says: "However meagre be our intellectual preception of divine knowledge, this will be more for us, as an ultimate end, than a perfect knowledge of inferior intelligible things."[33]

SECTION IV.—CAUSALITY AND KNOWLEDGE.

As we have just intimated the principle of causality is frequently employed in the discussion of knowledge in general, and of the knowableness of God in particular. Despite this fact, "the Scholastics did not make the principle

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[32] *Loc. cit.*, p. 554.
[33] *C. G.*, l. 3, c. 25.

of causality an object of special study,"[1] though it is used by them continually. The power the effects have, or the phenomena that *begin to be*, to teach us about the nature of the *something* that gave them being is fully recognized, and elaborated to great extent by St. Thomas. And we might say this is the only form under which the question is presented. The idea of cause for Aquinas was acquired as any other idea; it was the result of the abstractive power—the active intellect—at work on the deliverance of sense. External reality was not doubted by him; he was aware of immediately perceiving phenomena coming into existence, beginning to be, both internally and externally; and these beginnings must have a something to account for them. Internally, the power of thinking and willing was open to immediate view; change and modification were visible in the world; external objects gave rise to sensation, which in turn led to intellectual operation—the knowing power is passive, the object is active; all these factors contribute to the idea of cause. The principle was analytic for him, possessing the universality that pertains to every contingent existence stripped of its

[1] Kleutgen, *La Philosophie Scolastique*, v. 2, p. 46.

individual conditions; like all ideas it had its *fundamentum in re*, and in conjunction with the active intellect received its final form. Thus it was not Hume's observed uniformity of sequence due to custom, nor was it the subjective principle Kant made it out to be. St. Thomas, therefore, could not doubt its validity without running counter to his system of Moderate Realism, and the principle of causality, we note from his works, gave him no special alarm.

It is well known that the Scholastics after Aristotle divided all causes into four classes: formal, material, efficient, and final. The formal and material are the constituent principles of a thing, and we get a knowledge of them from the operations and qualities of the thing. And these lead to a knowledge of the final cause or the purpose of the thing. Efficient cause is a principle determing by its action the existence of a contingent thing; it produces something, and thus establishes a nexus or connection between itself and the result of its operation, the effect or thing. *Action* is its basis—the cause is the principle or source of action, and the effect is the terminus of the action. Its essential character is *production*. Though not every cause is efficient, yet every cause looks toward ef-

ficiency in some way. We shall consider efficient causality especially, though the arguments that establish its validity are also valid for the other causes.[2] The product or effect of the cause is a manifestation of the nature of the cause and leads to a knowledge of the cause; and it is this point we wish to consider.

This view of causality is based on the principle—*omne agens agit sibi simile*—every agent produces something similar to itself. The action of the cause consists in calling forth in the effect its own form which is a principle of activity—"for the active power is a principle of acting on something else."[3] From this similarity between the two, we can know something of the cause as shadowed in the effect. Similarity is an agreement in form. The cause is determined to some result either blindly, if a physical cause, or intelligently, if acting from the knowledge of a proposed end. The effect then pre-exists in its cause,

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[2] The Scholastics did not limit causality to efficient causality, as is done in Modern Philosophy, but they considered it in all its aspects, and regarded *final* as the most important.

[3] Ratio autem activi principii convenit potentiae activae. Nam potentia activa est principium agendi in aliud. *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 25, a. 1.

and thus every cause produces something like to itself; the closer the resemblance, the more perfect our knowledge of the cause. The effect may adequate or wholly express the power of the cause, or it may be but a far-off hint. "Every effect not equalling the power of the cause receives the likeness of the cause deficiently and not according to the same concept, so that what is divided and manifold in the effects, is simply and in the same way in the cause."[4]

The agreement may be specific, generic, or simply one of proportion, with a lessening knowledge power respectively. The effect is but the manifestation of the power of the cause according the axiom—*operatio sequitur esse*. "The effect shows the power of the cause only by reason of the action, which, proceeding from the power, is transmitted to effect. The nature of the cause is known only through the effect in so far as its power, which is in accord with nature, is

[4] Omnis effectus non adaequans virtutem causae agentis, recipit similitudinem agentis non secundum eamdem rationem, sed deficienter: ita ut quod divisim et multipliciter est in effectibus, in causa sit simpliciter et eodem modo. *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 13, a. 5.

known."[5] Moreover, "there is the same reason for the effect tending to the likeness of the cause, and for the cause assimilating or rendering the effect like to itself."[6] The effect is contained in the cause in some way, and imitates or resembles the cause in some particular—and these are the two factors in similarity. "Every effect represents its cause *aliqualiter*, but diversely: For some effect represents the simple causality of the cause, but not its form, as smoke represents a fire. . . But some effect represents the cause even to the likeness of its form, as produced fire the fire which produces it."[7] Smoke and fire both represent their cause, fire, but not to the same extent; and each in its way gives a knowledge of its cause. There is, however,

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[5] Non effectus ostendit virtutem causae nisi ratione actionis, quae a virtute procedens ad effectum terminatur. Natura autem causae non cognoscitur per effectum nisi in quantum per ipsum cognoscitur virtus ejus, quae natura consequitur. *C. G.*, 1. 3, c. 21.

[6] Ejusdem rationis est quod effectus tendit in similitudinem agentis, et quod agens assimilet sibi effectum. *C. G*, 1. 3, c. 21.

[7] Omnis effectus aliqualiter repraesentat suam causam, sed diversimode. Nam aliquis effectus repraesentat solam causalitatem causae, non autem formam ejus; sicut fumus repraesentat ignem. . . Aliquis autem effectus repraesentat causam quantum ad similitudinem formae ejus; sicut ignis generatus ignem generantem. *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 45, a. 7.

a distinction between the cause and the effect —"in every kind of cause, there is always found a distance (difference) between the cause and that of which it is the cause, according to some perfection or power."[8] Mr. Fiske, criticising the phrase we have just been discussing—the cause is in some way like the effect—as defended by Mr. Adam in his "Inquiry into the Theories of History," says, "Mr. Adam's reply savors of mediaeval realism."[9] Mr. Fiske seems to demand a *total* likeness in all cases, which "mediaeval realism" exacted of only *certain* causes. With the distinctions of St. Thomas regarding the knowledge power of the effect, on the basis of likeness to the cause, the position of Mr. Fiske has no weight.

The knowledge power of the effect depends on what sort of expression the cause has given of itself. Thus the Scholastics spoke of a univocal and an analogical cause. In general, the result of the operation of a univocal cause is a likeness in species between the cause and the effect, as that between a father and his son—here the effect equals the power of the cause. In the analogical cause, the likeness is not one of

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[8] In omnibus enim causae generibus semper invenitur distantia inter causam et id cujus est causa, secundum aliquam perfectionem, aut virtutem. *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 31, a. 1 ad 1.

[9] *Outlines of Cosmic Philosophy*, v. 2, p. 387.

quality, but one of proportional relation between cause and effect. In a univocal concept there is an agreement in word and in idea, and everything this idea expresses must apply equally and by the same right to all the objects of which it is affirmed. "Every effect of a univocal cause adequates the power of the cause,"[10] and hence gives the most perfect knowledge of the cause that we can attain to. We do not mention equivocal cause, since "where there is pure equivocation there is no likeness in things, but only a unity of name",[11] and hence it is not a source of knowledge. Truth is the proportion between concepts and things, as already noted. The analogical concept is not the full manifestation of the cause as the univocal, nor is it a mere metaphor as the equivocal, but it is between them and gives a real, though proportional, knowledge of the cause. It is not equivalent to a metaphor as Caldecott quotes St. Thomas as holding, when speaking of the applicability of certain attributes to God—"such as are predicable of Him only after the way of analogy or metaphor."[12]

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[10] Omnis effectus agentis univoci adaequat virtutem agentis. Pot., q. 7, a. 7.

[11] Ubi est pura aequivocatio nulla similitudo in rebus attenditur, sed solum unitas nominis. *C. G.*, l. 1, c. 33.

[12] *Selections from the Literature of Theism*, p. 19.

Aquinas recognizes both analogy and metaphor, but with a great distinction, as we shall see later on. There is real knowledge in analogical predication. The proportion or relation in analogy may be based on the comparison of two objects to an independent third, or one of the two may be related to the other. This latter is the one of cause and effect, and presupposes that they have something in common in a way, however slight that may be, and thus we are led to a proportional knowledge of the cause by a consideration of the relation of the effect to the cause.

St. Thomas has summarized briefly the three ways an effect can lead us to a knowledge of a cause. "One way, when the effect is taken as a medium for knowing the existence and the nature of the cause, as takes place in the sciences which demonstrate the cause through the effect. Another way, when the cause is seen in the effect itself in so far as the likeness of the cause results in the effect, as man is seen in a mirror on account of his likeness . . . The third way, when the likenss of the cause in the effect is the form by which its effect knows the cause. . . But by none of these ways by effect can the cause be known, unless the effect be adequate to the cause, in which the

whole power of the cause is expressed."[13] St. Thomas here refers to a complete knowledge of the nature of the cause, not a partial one. An adequate concept gives a knowledge of a thing as it is in itself, in as far as it is knowable— "a thing is known in itself when it is known through a specific likeness adequate to the knowable itself." We can have some knowledge of a thing without having an adequate knowledge of it, and this partial knowledge is given us by all effects. "From every manifest effect we can demonstrate the existence of the cause."[14] The producing power of secondary agents must be admitted, says Aquinas, "or else the nature of no created thing could be known through the effect, and all knowledge of natural

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[13] Contingit enim ex effectu cognoscere causam multipliciter. Uno modo, secundum quod effectus sumitur ut medium ad cognoscendum de causa quod sit, et quod talis sit, sicut accidit in scientiis quae causam demonstrant per effectum. Alio modo, ita quod in ipso effectu videatur causa in quantum similitudo causae resultat in effectu: sicut homo videtur in speculo propter suam similitudinem . . . Tertio modo, ita quod ista similitudo causae in effectu sit forma qua cognoscit causam suus effectus . . . Nullo autem istorum modorum per effectum potest cognosci causa quid sit, nisi effectus causae adaequatus, in quo tota virtus causae exprimatur. *C. G.*, 1. 3, c. 49.

[14] Ex quocumque effectu manifesto nobis potest demonstrari causam esse. *Sum Theol.*, I, q. 2, a. 2 ad 3.

science, which relies especially on demonstration through effects, would be taken away.[15]

The degrees of knowledge derived from the effect vary. "The perfection of the effect determines the perfection of the cause."[16] The effect, however, as just noted, is seldom of such a character as to adequate the nature of the cause, hence we need many effects to make our knowledge more stable. Every actual effect "can be infallibly submitted to certain knowledge." "But when we know a contingent effect in its cause only, we have but a conjectural knowledge of it."[17] The larger the *number* of manifestations and the *greater*, the more perfect will be our knowledge of the cause. "It is manifest that the causality of a cause and its power is known in proportion to the number and greatness of its known effects."[18] This is important in determining our knowledge of God, for all

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[15] Si igitur res creatae non habent actiones ad producendum effectus, sequitur quod nunquam natura alicujus rei creatae poterit cognosci per effectum, et sic subtrahitur nobis omnis cognitio scientiae naturalis, in qua praecipue demonstrationes per effectum sumuntur. *C. G.*, 1. 3, c. 69.

[16] Perfectio effectus determinat perfectionem causae. *C. G.*, 1. 3, c. 69.

[17] Sum. Theol., I, q. 14, a. 13.

[18] Manifestum est quod causalitas alicujus causae et virtus ejus tanto magis cognoscitur, quanto plures et majores ejus effectus innotescunt. *C. G.*, 1. 3, c. 49.

creation is His work, it contains innumerable manifestations of His Power, and the more we know of them and the more deeply we enter into them, the more complete will be our idea of the Supreme Cause in whom all these effects find a single, harmonious setting.

CHAPTER II

THE KNOWABLENESS OF GOD.

SECTION I.—EXISTENCE OF GOD.

The general principles of all knowledge and especially the elements involved in intellectual knowledge find their application in the question of God. This is quite natural, since for Aquinas there is a *unity* running through all things, so that the highest product of a given genus is practically the lowest being in the genus immediately above it.[1] There is more reason for this intimate connection between knowledge in general and the knowledge of God in particular; for if we admit that we can know God at all, the natural inference is, that the process that leads to a knowledge of Him should follow lines similar to those that lead to a knowledge of anything. In both cases, we have the same human mind, the same data, and with the modifications coincident to a certain class or kind of objects, the same

[1] *C. G.*, 1. 3, c. 97.

principles should hold. As our knowledge becomes more complex, owing to the nature of the thing known, it admits new factors, though the fundamental elements are always the same. Likewise the knowledge we have of God rests on the general basis of knowledge, though there are and must be factors peculiar to it, else it would not really be an addition to our cognitions.

The actual application of the principles thus far discussed will come in evidence as the question is developed. We may at once, however, briefly state the chief points of contact:

1. All knowledge requires a relation of knower and known, thus God and man must be related in some way.

2. Man knows only according to his own nature, hence our knowledge of God will be in terms of our intellect.

3. A requisite for knowledge is actuality or immateriality, and the degree of knowledge is regulated by the degree of actuality; God is supremely actual, and hence infinitely knowable in Himself.

4. All knowledge takes its rise in the senses—thus excluding innate ideas and intuitions; but the intellectual idea is due to an abstractive power, the active intellect, operating on the deliverance of the sensitive image. The idea of

God arises from the same source as material things—it is not an intuition nor innate—but receives final expression only after we have purified it from imperfections, by a process that can be readily likened to the work of the active intellect.

5. The validity of all knowledge, that of God included, depends on the proper relation between the reality of things and the truthfulness of our faculties, as already indicated.

The problem of God raises two questions at the outset: Is there a God? and if so, What is the nature of God? The great difference between these two queries in the light of difficulty of solution, and also of importance in the conclusion reached, was fully recognized by St. Thomas, and the Scholastics generally. We have already noted the attitude of Aquinas regarding the existence and the nature of the soul,—"many know they have a soul who do not know what the soul is"; and again, "each one experiences in himself that he has a soul, and that the acts of the soul take place within him, but to know the nature of the soul is most difficult."[2] He is similarly minded on the points of God's existence and of God's nature. Existence and nature comprise the

[2] *De Veri.*, q. 10, a. 8 ad 8.

Scholatic phrases of *An Sit* and *Quid Sit*.[3]

There is no doubt that if we prove the existence of an object, we must as a consequence know *something* about it, and in this sense Prof. Royce is right when he says: "A really fruitful philosophical study of the conception of God is inseparable from an attempt to estimate what evidence there is for the existence of God." The further statement—"the proof that one can offer for God's presence at the heart of the world constitutes also the best exposition that one can suggest regarding what one means by the conception of God,"[4] is not sufficiently complete. In this view, existence and nature are correlative. If we have proven the existence of an object, we know its nature implicitly or fundamentally, but not explicitly; thus the mere existence is not the "best exposition" of the nature. We may prove the existence of God and still have but a vague general idea of what God is, as the proofs St. Thomas offers for God's existence show; it is only after a process of deduction and the analysis of the idea given by the proofs that we can be said to have an exposition worthy to be called a satisfactory or rounded conception. An adequate or proper concept of God can not be arrived at by the

[3] *C. G.*, 1. 1, c. 12.

[4] *The Conception of God*, pp. 6, 7.

human mind in its present condition—and to this extent the essence of God, His nature in se, remains unknown to us, yet there is a concept of God's nature that we can truly reach by determined methods, and this we hope to establish.

Existence and conception can be considered independently. Whether we handle both or only one, we practically travel over the same ground. In a conception we are held to give as much as the human intellect can attain to regarding the idea of God; in proving the existence of God we are only bound to as much as the facts contain that lead to this existence—we have still the analysis of this idea on hand. The existence alone lacks completeness, the conception by itself is a mere idea. St. Thomas combines both, and only when both are treated is our quest a fruitful one. If God were an intuition, the questions of existence and nature would blend, would be one; if He is known only by demonstration they are distinct, though closely connected.

How is the existence of God known? It is not known *per se*, says Aquinas, and hence it must be known by demonstration. St. Thomas considers the two great aspects under which a thing is knowable, before he advances evidence for God's existence. An object is knowable in

itself—*per se nota*—and it is knowable relatively to us—*quoad nos nota*. A proposition is knowable in itself when the predicate is included in the concept of the subject or immediately connected with it. The proposition, man is an animal, is knowable in itself, because the predicate animal is included in the concept man. The same is true of first principles; but first principles are not only knowable in themselves but also immediately knowable to us. A proposition is knowable in itself and knowable to us when we immediately perceive the necessary connection between the subject and the predicate—as in the first principle, the whole is greater than a part.

When we come to the proposition God exists—*Deus est*—we have a proposition per se nota to one who understands the meaning of the words, God and exists. "But as we do not know what God is, this proposition is not per se nota, but needs to be demonstrated through those things that are more known to us, and less known in their nature, namely effects."[5] The existence of God must then be proven. To know a proposition per se, it is needful that

[5] Sed quia nos non scimus de Deo quid est, non est nobis per se nota, sed indiget demonstrari per ea quae sunt magis nota quoad nos, et minus nota quoad naturam, scilicet per effectus. *Sum. Theol.* I, q. 2, a. 1.

its terms and their relation be known; if either is unknown we can not speak of per se nota. It is not surprising that the existence of God is not known per se to us, "for our intellect is related to objects that are most known as the eye of an owl to the sun."[6] Before giving his proofs for God's existence, St. Thomas shows the insufficieny of the Argument of St. Anselm to prove the existence of God, and in general, of all positions that do not start with material things as a basis, and from them rise to a knowledge of God.

The Ontological argument was advanced by St. Anselm, modified by Descartes, and supplemented by Leibniz. It has likewise been handled by some other philosophers, either for commendation or rejection, such as, Spinoza, Locke, Kant, Hegel. We shall give briefly the position of the first three named, before we present the reason for its rejection by Aquinas.

St. Anselm tells us that he had been seeking a long time for one argument that would suffice to establish the existence of God—"a single argument that would require no other for its proof than itself alone; and alone would suffice to demonstrate that God truly exists."[7] After

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[6] Ad ea quae sunt notissima rerum, noster intellectus se habeat, ut oculus noctuae ad solem. *C. G.*, l, c. 11.

[7] *Preface to Proslogium.*

a weary struggle in thought he finally reached the following argument: Even the fool, he says, has the idea of the being than which nothing greater can be conceived, though he does not understand it to exist. "And whatever is understood exists in the understanding. And assuredly that than which nothing greater can be conceived, cannot exist in the understanding alone. For suppose it exists in the understanding alone, then it can be conceived to exist in reality, which is greater. . . There is no doubt that there exists a being, than which nothing greater can be conceived, and it exists both in the understanding and in reality."[8] Descartes held that we have an idea of a supremely perfect being. The idea which is clear and distinct, contains in itself the idea of existence, for if we think of a mountain we must recognize that there is a valley, for the two are inseparable; so if we have the idea of the infinite, the idea of existence necessarily accompanies it. This perfect being must contain all perfection, but existence is a perfection and thus cannot be wanting to it.[9] Leibniz gives the form of the argument as set forth by Anselm and Descartes thus: "God is the greatest or (as Descartes says)

[8] *Ibid.*, c. 2.

[9] *Principia Philosophiae*, part 1, 14; *Med.* 3.

the most perfect of beings, or rather a being of supreme grandeur and perfection including all degrees thereof. That is the notion of God." He goes on to say, "The Scholastics, not even excepting their Doctor Angelicus have misunderstood this argument and have taken it as a paralogism; in which respect they were altogether wrong. It is not a paralogism, but it is an imperfect demonstration which assumes something that must still be proved in order to render it mathematically evident; that is, it is tacitly assumed that this idea of the All-great or All-perfect being is possible, and implies no contradition. And it is already something that by this remark it is proved that assuming that God is possible He exists, which is the privilege of divinity alone." This element of *possibility* is what Leibniz added to the argument, and of which he said, "We have the right to presume the possibility of every being, and especially that of God, until someone proves the contrary."[10]

We may be easily mislead by the Ontological Argument, and any position in fact, that seeks to rest simply on ideas that are common to mankind as a result of circumstances, and that does not probe into the history and develop-

[10] *Nouveaux Essais*, c. 10.

ment of these ideas. St. Thomas wisely remarks that "men are accustomed to hear and invoke the name of God from infancy; but custom, and especially that dating from childhood, has the force of nature; whence it is brought about that those things by which one is imbued from boyhood are as firmly held as if they were naturally and per se known. Moreover, this happens because we do not distinguish between a thing known in itself simply and as known by us."[11] Anselm, of course was aware of the difference between an idea and the objective existence of a corresponding thing—he says, "it is one thing for an object to be in the understanding, and another to understand that the object exists."[12] He also admitted the *a posteriori* argument for God's existence, as did Descartes likewise. Yet in the argument under consideration, he lays great stress on the fact that from the idea of God we can proceed further and come to reality, but he does not speak of the origin of this idea or its basis in anything outside the mind. And this is where it diverges from the view of Aquinas,

[11] A principio homines assueti sunt nomen Dei audire et invocare. Consuetudo autem, et praecipue quae est a principio, vim naturae obtinet; ex quo contingit ut ea quibus a pueritia animus imbuitur, ita firmiter teneantur ac si essent naturaliter et per se nota. *C. C.*, 1. 1, c. 11.

[12] Pros., c. 2.

who first traces the steps that lead to this idea before he seeks to specify it. The word God does not awaken the same idea in all men," for some believed God to be body"; granting that it did, "it would not follow that what is understood by this name is in *rerum natura*, but only an intellectual idea."[13]

The flaw in the argument is the passage from the ideal to the real, and St. Thomas pointed this out clearly, though unfortunately he did not go further and tell us how he arrived at this distinction. The fact that he made this distinction is evident, and refutes the unwarranted imputation of naive realism. It was perhaps his undoubted trust in reality that prevented him from going beyond a mere reference to the distinction between the ideal and the real.[14]

St. Thomas regards the argument as a *petitio principii*. "His (Anselm's) argument proceeds from this supposition that he posits some being

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[13] Dato enim quod quilibet intelligat hoc nomine, Deus, significari hoc quod dicitur (scilicet illud quo magis cogitari non potest); non tamen propter hoc sequitur quod intelligat id quod significatur per nomen, esse in rerum natura, sed in apprehensione intellectus tantum. *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 2, a. 1 ad 2.

[14] Modern philosophers, as a rule, when they refer to this argument, give Kant the credit for picking the flaw in it, though he simply repeats the criticism given by St. Thomas.

than which no greater can be thought."[15] "Unless we concede there is something in *rerum natura* than which no greater can be thought",[16] we can think something greater. The fact that we can think God not to exist "does not arise from the imperfection or uncertainty of His existence, but from the weakness of our intellect which can not see Him through himself, but through His effects. And thus we are lead to know His existence by demonstration."[17]

The existence of God is then a matter of demonstration. There are two kinds of demonstration—one from cause to effect, the other from effect to cause. The former is called *propter quid* or *a priori*, the latter *quia* or *a posteriori*. "When some effect is more manifest to us than its cause, we proceed through the effect to a knowledge of the cause. From every

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[15] Ratio sua procedit ex hac suppositione, quod supponatur aliquid esse quo majus cogitari non potest. *Com. on Lomb.*, I, Dis. 3, q 1, a. 2 ad 4.

[16] Non enim inconveniens est, quolibet dato vel in re, vel in intellectu, aliquid majus cogitari posse, nisi ei qui concedit esse aliquid, quo majus cogitari non possit in rerum natura. *C. G.* l. 1, c. 11.

[17] Nam quod (Deus) possit cogitari non esse, non ex imperfectione sui esse est, vel incertitudine, quum suum, esse, sit secundum se manifestissimum, sed ex debilitate intellectus nostri, qui eum intueri non potest per ipsum, sed ex effectibus ejus. Et sic, ad cognoscendum ipsum esse, ratiocinando perducitur. *C. G.*, l. 1, c. 11.

effect the existence of its specific cause can be demonstrated, provided its effects are more known to us, for since effects depend on a cause, the effect given, the cause must necessarily exist. Whence the existence of God, as it is not per se known to us, is demonstrated through effects known to us."[18]

The existence of God is proven from effects. The fundamental statement and fact in this question from man's standpoint is this: God, as all other objects, is known from material things. "Though God exceeds all sensible things and sense itself, yet His effects, from which we prove His existence, are sensible. As the origin of knowledge is in sense, so of those things which surpass sense."[19] "The human intellect by its natural power cannot grasp the substance of God, since our intellectual knowl-

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[18] Cum enim effectus aliquis nobis est manifestior quam sua causa, per effectum procedimus ad cognitionem causae. Ex quolibet autem effectu potest demonstrari propriam causam ejus esse, si tamen ejus effectus sint magis noti quoad nos; quia cum effectus dependeant a causa, posito effectu, necesse est causam praeexistere. Unde Deum esse, secundum quod non est per se notum quoad nos, demonstrabile est per effectus nobis notos. *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 2, a. 2.

[19] Etsi Deus sensibilia omnia et sensum excedat, ejus tamen effectus, ex quibus demonstratio sumitur ad probandum Deum esse, sensibiles sunt; et sic nostrae cognitionis origo in sensu est, etiam de his quae sensum excedunt. *C. G.*, l. 1, c. 12.

edge in this life takes its rise in the senses. . . Yet from material things our intellect rises to a divine knowledge, a knowledge of God's existence and the qualities it is proper to attribute to Him as the First Cause."[20] Material things are diverse, and a rational consideration of any class of them will lead us to a conclusion above and beyond the members of the class, singly or collectively taken. We seek to know as much of them as can be known and while thus engaged we are brought to a something that agrees with them in a way, and yet surpasses them to a much greater extent. We suspect this something has more to do with the material things before us than a simple view of them seems to warrant.

In this spirit, a spirit that allows the reasoning faculty to pursue what appears its legitimate course in dealing with phenomena, St. Thomas considers five lines of facts and follows them back to what is for him an inevitable logical conclusion. These proofs are so many evidences of his basic principle of

[20] Ad substantiam ipsius capiendam, intellectus humanus non potest naturali virtute pertingere, quum intellectus nostri, secundum modum praesentis vitae, cognitio a sensu incipiat. . . Ducitur tamen ex sensibilibus intellectus noster in divinam cognitionem, ut cognoscat de Deo quia est, et alia hujusmodi, quae oportet attribui primo principio. *C. G.*, l. 1, c. 3.

knowledge—that all our knowledge comes from material things, takes its rise in the senses.

In the formation of the concept of God, then, there are two factors—material things and the reasoning faculty. We perceive objects about us the reason of whose existence is not self-evident nor self-explanatory, and there is in man a natural desire to get at the bottom of things, to seek an explanation of what he sees. What is this natural desire in the system of Aquinas?

St. Thomas admits that each man has as a natural endowment, a tendency to God, which affects his whole being. There is the desire for unlimited happiness, and perfection in its fulness, and the desire for a completely satisfied inquisitiveness. "Man naturally desires happiness," and thus God, "in so far as God is the beatitude of man."[21] "There is a certain general and confused knowledge of God, which is, as it were, present to all men." And this is true "because man by natural reason can readily arrive at some knowledge of God, for men seeing that the things of nature move according to order, understand that there is some ordainer of these things, for there is no ordering without an orderer." Yet this general

[21] *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 2, a. 1 ad 1.

view does not reveal, "*who* or *of what nature*, or if there be but *one* orderer of nature."[22] Those, therefore, who contend that God is immediately known because He is the adequate explanation of things, must remember that our concept of this adequate principle of all is at first very vague. It exists however, and resting on it St. Thomas builds up a position that we might call the Nature-God Tendency, "the intellectual substance tends to divine knowledge as a last end."[23]

This tendency or disposition is principally an internal affair, a spontaneous expression of our nature, yet even here the starting point, the basis of its operation, lies in things with-

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[22] Est enim quaedam communis et confusa Dei cognitio, quae quasi omnibus hominibus adest. . . Quia naturali ratione statim homo in aliqualem Dei cognitionem pervenire potest; videntes enim homines res naturales secundum ordinem creatum currere; quum ordinatio absque ordinatore non sit. . . Quis, autem qualis, vel si unus tantum est ordinator naturae nondum stat in ex hac communi consideratione habetur. *C. G.*, 1. 3, c. 38.

[23] Substantia igitur intellectualis tendit in divinam cognitionem sicut in ultimum finem. *C. G.*, 1. 3, c. 25. Driscoll apty calls this tendency by the name of 'spontaneous knowledge of God.' It is distinguished by two important characteristics, he says. "a) It arises from rational nature by the use of faculties connatural to all. Hence it is not an intuition, nor is it the result of a special faculty. b) It is universal with human nature. *God. Pref.* to 2nd ed., p. VIII.

out, in sensible objects. The mind cannot rest in these objects, but advances, "for nothing finite can quiet the desire of the intellect." Thus as there is a "natural desire to know in all intellectual natures, so there is a natural desire to dispel ignorance or nescience."[24] We are therefore lead to as thorough a knowledge and as complete an explanation of things as our powers admit. The imperfect desires to attain perfection in a given sphere, "for he who has an opinion about a certain thing, which is an imperfect knowledge of that thing, from this very fact is incited to desire a scientific knowledge of it. . . We do not think we know an object if we are ignorant of its substance, whence our principal aim in knowing a thing is to get at its nature or quiddity."[25] We perceive that men act, and we attribute their action to a certain cause to which we give the name soul, though we know not as yet the

[24] Nihil finitum desiderium intellectus quietare potest. . . Sicut naturale desiderium inest omnibus intellectualibus naturis ad sciendum, ita inest naturale desiderium ignorantiam seu nescientiam pellendi. *C. G.*, 1. 3, c. 50.

[25] Omne enim quod est imperfectum in aliqua specie desiderat consequi perfectionem speciei illius; qui enim habet opinionem de re aliqua, quae est imperfecta illius rei notitia, ex hoc ipso incitatur ad desiderandum illius rei scientiam. . . Non enim arbitramur nos aliquid cognoscere si substantiam ejus non cognoscimus. Unde et praecipuum in cognitione alicujus rei est scire de ea quid est. *C. G.*, 1. 3, c. 50.

nature of the soul, if it be body, or how it affects the operations we witness."[26]

Philosophy was born in the "natural desire all men have of knowing the causes of what they see", and not until they "have the cause, are they at rest. The quest however does not cease until they have reached the first cause, for then only do we consider our knowledge perfect when we know the first cause. Man naturally desires to know the first cause as if an ultimate end."[27] It is easy to see whither this thought leads; this desire "tends toward something definite. We find as a fact in this desire of knowing the more one knows, the greater is one's desire to know; hence this natural desire of man for knowing tends toward some determined end. But this end can be no other than

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[26] Quam videmus hominen moveri et alia opera agere, percipimus in eo quandam causam harum operationum quae aliis rebus non inest, et hanc causam animam nominamus, nondum tamen scientes quid sit anima, si est corpus, vel qualiter operationes praedictas efficiat. *C. G.*, 1. 3, c. 38.

[27] Naturaliter inest omnibus hominibus desiderium cognoscendi causa earum quae videntur; unde, propter admirationem eorum quae videbantur quorum causae latebant, homines primo philosophari coeperunt; invenientes autem causam quiescebant. Nec sistit inquisitio quousque perveniatur ad primam causam: et tunc perfecte nos scire arbitramur quando primam causam cognoscimus. Desiderat igitur homo naturaliter cognoscere primam causan quasi ultimum finem. *C. G.*, l. 3, c. 25.

the most excellent that is knowable which is God."[28] Again, in accordance with the general principles of knowledge we come to the same conclusion. "Man naturally desires to know the cause of every known effect, but the human intellect knows *ens universale*, therefore it naturally desires to know its cause, which is God only."[29]

We can then state, that there is innate in man a faculty or power which abstracts particular, general, transcendental concepts from the data of the senses, and which from these concepts, by a process of negation and combination, forms other concepts, even the concept of God; and finally, a natural tendency which seeks the cause of things known, and is not at rest until it finds the first cause, and knows its nature in some way.[30] To this extent the idea of God

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[28] Quod igitur vehementius in aliquid tendit postea quam prius, non movetur ad infinitum, sed ad aliquid determinatum tendit. Hoc autem invenimus in desiderio sciendi; quanto enim aliquis plura scit, tanto majori desiderio affectat scire. Tendit igitur desiderium naturale hominis in sciendo ad aliquem determinatum finem. Hoc autem non potest esse aliud quam nobilissimum scibile, quod Deus est. *C. G.*, l. 3, c. 25.

[29] Cujuslibet effectus cogniti naturaliter homo causam scire desiderat. Intellectus autem humanus cognoscit ens universale. Desiderat igitur naturaliter cognoscere causam ejus, quae solum Deus est. *C. G.*, 1. 3, c. 25.

[30] This statemeut is taken from Hontheim's *Theodicea*, p. 19.

is innate in us. Hontheim and others think it better to refrain from speaking of this innate idea of God at the present time, on account of the danger of abuse, yet it exists in the sense explained and is so admitted by St. Thomas, and it is but just to those who hold we have an immediate or innate idea of God—as this word innate is usually understood—to admit the amount of truth their view contains.[31]

This concession however, does not do away with the necessity of demonstration and analysis for attaining the idea of God in so far as the human mind can attain it. Aquinas does not lose sight of his main thesis—that all knowledge rises from the senses. "There is a certain confused estimation by which God is commonly known by all or most men . . . and there is also a knowledge of God by way of demonstration"[32]—the former is the knowledge common

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[31] Moreover, this shows that the view St. Thomas took of the problem of God was broad and flexible, and offsets the impression that the idea of God for him was a rigid, formal conception—Being and nothing else, and this even in Pantheistic sense, as we find stated by J. W. Hanne in *Die Idee der Absoluten Persönlichkeit*, pp. 486-494. There is much material in Aquinas to lengthen out the point we have just touched on in the text.

[32] Communiter ab omnibus vel pluribus (Deus) cognoscitur secundum quamdam aestimationem confusam . . . cognoscitur (Deus) per viam demonstrationis. *C. G.*, 1. 3, c. 48.

to all, a vague knowledge; the latter is a proper knowledge of God resting on argument and proof. Moreover, he does not allow a greater certainty to conclusions based on the data of consciousness as consciousness, "for although the human mind has greater likeness to God than inferior creatures, yet the knowledge of God which is derived from the human mind does not exceed the kind of knowledge which arises from sensible things, since the soul only knows its nature because it understands the natures of sensible objects. Whence God is not known through this source in a higher way than the cause is known through the effect."[33] This statement bars innate ideas from the system of Aquinas, as well as what is now called Personal Idealism, which cuts away from the sensible world and tries to find in consciousness alone its view of God. St. Thomas says we gain nothing by this procedure, for whence comes our knowledge of consciousness? From sensible things. Hence it is, that after the admis-

[33] Quamvis autem mens humana propinquiori Dei similitudinem repraesentat quam inferiores creaturae, tamen cognitio Dei, quae ex mente humana accipi potest, non excedit illud genus cognitionis quod ex sensibilibus sumitur, cum et ipsa anima de seipsa cognoscat quid est, per hoc quod naturas intelligit sensibilium. Unde nec per hanc viam cognosci Deus altiori modo potest quam sicut causa cognoscitur per effectum. *C. G.*, 1. 3, c. 47.

sions already noted, he sets out to prove the existence of God from five points of view, each, however, starting from material things.

The first argument is taken from the fact of motion. This St. Thomas calls "the more manifest way" or fact to start with. "It is certain and evident to sense that there is movement in the world, but what is moved is moved by another, for nothing is moved except it is in potency to the movement it undergoes. Naught passes from the potential to the actual save through the actual . . . for the same thing cannot be potential and actual at the same time under the same aspect, but only under diverse aspects. . . It is thus impossible that from the same point of view, and in the same manner, something be mover and moved, or something move itself. . . Therefore whatever is moved must be moved by another." Everything in motion is moved by another, but we cannot admit this "process in infinitum, otherwise there would be no first mover, and consequently no motion. . . Therefore we must come to some prime mover that is moved by no other, and all understand this to be God."

The second argument rests on the "concept of efficient cause. We find in these sensible things an order of efficient causes; yet we do not discover, nor can we, that anything is its

own efficient cause, for thus it would be prior to itself which is impossible." These causes are related—first, intermediate, and ultimate; the last depends on the intermediate, and these, whether one or many, depend on a first, or else they themselves should not exist, which is contrary to fact, and we should be obliged to admit an infinite regress. "We must therefore posit some efficient first cause, which we call God."

We have then the argument from contingent or possible being to necessary being. We find certain things that are indifferent to existence. They may or may not exist; but things of this nature were not always. If all things were thus indifferent, there would have been a time when there was no existence. If this is true then there would be no existence now, which is false, for "nothing begins to be except through what is." There must then be some necessary existence in things. This necessary being or existence has the cause of its necessity in itself or from without. If from without we are again on the path of efficient causes, and thus can not proceed in infinitum. "Therefore, we must posit something necessary per se, whose necessity is not caused, but which is the cause of necessity to others. And this we call God."

The various degrees of perfection found in things, is the basis of the fourth argument. In objects we find that we can apply the particles "more" or "less" to their qualities of goodness, truth, and the like. This comparison rests on agreement with a standard which is fully what they are in part. In a given line of perfection we have degrees in various proportions, there must then be an absolute perfection in this line which is the basis and standard of these degrees. "Therefore there is something which is the cause of the being, goodness, and every perfection of all beings, and this we call God."

The last argument leads to an intelligent being from the idea of order in things. We see objects that are irrational act for an end, and this not occasionally but always, or at least most frequently they act to attain what is best; thus this action is not due to chance. But irrational objects can not act thus unless they are directed by some rational or intellectual being. "Therefore there is something intelligent by which all natural things are ordained to an end. And this we call God."[34]

[34] These arguments are taken from the *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 2, a. 3.

SECTION II.—THE FIRST CAUSE.

The principle running through the proofs is that of causality. The result of each line of evidence is the outcome of the application of this principle. The facts of motion, contingency, production, and the like, in the world, call for an explanation; an ultimate explanation of all phenomena is the one point that marks off divine causality from created causes. In secondary causes, we find the immediate, partial reason for a given event, in divine causality, the principle is pushed to its limit and we reach the final reason for all events. This final explanation is the goal of every philosophical system, and rests on the amount of knowledge the phenomena about us can give us of their ultimate cause.

Whether we regard the principle of causality as objective with St. Thomas, or make it subjective as Kant and his followers hold, this much at least is certain: we perceive things, phenomena, that call for an explanation, and there is in man a natural tendency to seek the explanation of things—these two factors combined lead us to an ultimate ground or reason of appearances. A Conception of God might then be defined, the ultimate explanation of what the individual or conceiver thinks needs

explanation. In this sense, we can have no contention with the Conception as such, but if there is disagreement it must be looked for much further back—in the theory of reality, which depends on the theory of knowledge. And here is where the need of a true theory of knowledge is absolutely necessary. Thus the Agnostic Unknowable God is the result of the doctrine of the Unknowable in general. The Idealistic Conception of God is the logical outcome of the denial of external reality. The Intuitionists go astray in considering God as primo and per se known. Those who say that God is a necessary Postulate, deny the real proving power of His manifestations. The position of Aquinas is based on the principles already discussed—the consideration of phenomena, material things, lead us to their final explanation. This is illustrated by the arguments advanced for proving God's existence.

Some consider the first four proofs as instances of efficient causality, and the fifth as teleological. Others regard the four kinds of causes utilized—first and second proofs represent effiicient cause, the third, material cause, the fourth, formal cause, and the fifth, final or exemplar cause. Whatever view we take, the result is practithe same for the proving power of the effects. Though efficient causality was not the only

or the principal one for the Scholastics, yet as already noted, every cause looks toward efficiency, and hence the effects of each cause give us a knowledge of the cause; and this for our purpose is the important aspect of causality.

We might, as an instance, consider the knowledge we can derive of the nature of the final or exemplar cause from a consideration of its effects. This is the fifth argument that leads to God as Intelligence—the other arguments, as arguments, present Him as Prime Mover, First Cause, Necessary Being, Perfect Being, respectively. The axiom—omne agens agit sibi simile—gets a higher meaning when the agens acts by intelligence. Here enters the idea of a free agent, and unlike an agent that acts with its physical being only and is limited to one determined effect, we have now a variety of effects depending on the choice of the intelligent cause. "The effects proceed from a cause as they preexist in a cause, since omne agens agit sibi simile. But the effects preexist in the cause according to the nature of the cause."[1] Aquinas concludes that the effects of human and divine

[1] Effectus procedit a causo agente, secundum quod praeexistunt in ea; quia omne agens agit sibi simile. Praeexistunt autem effectus in causa secundum modum causae. *Sum. Theol.*, I, q., 9, a. 4.

causality are present to these causes "according to an intelligent nature." The effect agrees with the idea or prototype in the mind of the agent. Here we meet the question of Divine Ideas which are the measure of things, and of which we receive a knowledge from a consideration of their expression in nature.

Ideas or forms in general are distinct or rather different from the existent objects, and can be viewed under a twofold aspect. They may be the principle of knowledge of a thing, and then we have the idea, form, or species as already discussed—for the thing itself must be known if the idea, according to which the thing is made, is known. They may be the exemplars of the existent things, for the intelligent agent acts only in so far as he has in his mind the idea or model of what he is to produce, and this idea must be a determined, specific one or the result would be fortuitous. In this sense, the idea is causal, it is the plan the agent follows in his operations. There is then an agreement between the idea and the object based on it. "The exemplar forms of the Divine Intellect are productive of the whole object, both matter and form. And hence they embrace not only the nature of the species but also the specific character of the individual—

first, however the nature of the species."[2] All creation, all finite effects, have their originals in the Mind of God; hence by a knowledge of these effects we are led back to a knowledge of their models, and through the models we learn something of the nature of the cause.

These ideas in the Divine Essence constitute God's knowledge of things other than Himself, which are based on these ideas. "Idea does not signify Divine Essence as Divine Essence, but only as it is the likeness or concept of this or that object."[3] And again, "the Essence of God is the idea of things, not indeed as essence, but as it is understood."[4] "Thus God by knowing His essence knows other things, as effects are known through a knowledge of the cause."[5] On the basis of things as having their models in

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[2] Formae exemplares intellectus divinae sunt factivae totius rei, et quantum ad materiam, et quantum ad formam; et ideo respiciunt creaturam non solum quantum ad naturam speciei, sed etiam quantum ad singularitatem individui, per prius tamen quantum ad naturam speciei. Quodl. 8, q. 1, a. 2.

[3] Idea non nominat divinam essentiam, in quantum est essentia, sed in quantum est similitudo vel ratio hujus vel illius rei. *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 15, a. 2 ad 1.

[4] Essentia Dei est idea rerum, non quidem ut essentia, sed ut est intellecta. *De Veri.*, q. 3, a. 2.

[5] Sic Deus cognoscendo suam essentiam, alia cognoscit, sicut per cognitionem causae cognoscuntur effectus. *C. G.* l. 1, c. 68.

the Divine Mind, on the same principle that effects give us a knowledge of their cause, we rise to a knowledge of God.

"Creatures lead us to a knowledge of God as effects conduct to the cause. Natural reason can know of God only what is proper to Him as the principle or cause of all beings."[6] The manifestations of God are numerous, and must be so, since "no creature can be equal to God," though He as "every cause tends to produce His likeness in the effect in so far as the effect can receive it. . . Hence there is required a multiplicity and variety in created things so that a perfect likeness of God, according to His nature, be found in them."[7] Even with effects that are numerous, and that vary in greatness, "we experience daily that there is a defect in our knowledge, for there are many qualities of sensible objects of which we are ignorant, and in many of those qualities which we do apprehend by sense,

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[6] Creaturae ducunt in Dei cognitionem, sicut effectus in causam. Hoc igitur solum ratione naturali de Deo cognosci potest, quod competere ei necesse est, secundum quod est omnium entium principium. *Sum. Theol*, I, q. 32, a. 1.

[7] Non enim creatura potest esse Deo aequalis. . . Quum enim omne agens intendit suam similitudinem in effectum inducere, secundum quod effectus capere potest. . . Oportuit igitur esse multiplicitatem et varietatem in rebus creatis, ad hoc, quod inveniretur in eis Dei similitudo perfecta secundum modum suum. *C. G.*, 1. 2, c. 45.

we do not attain to perfect knowledge. To a much greater extent therefore is human reason insufficient to investigate all that is intelligible about that most excellent, transcendant substance."[8] We are capable however, of attaining a partial knowledge, which though not adequate is true as far as it goes.

There are a few misapprehensions of the view of Aquinas about the nature of the First Cause that ought to be removed before we take up specifically the Quid Sit, or what we can know about the Nature of God. God is a universal, permanent, continuous cause, present in each phenomenon by His actuality, and contributing more to the result of the created secondary activity than the immediate secondary cause.

St. Thomas says that the very unity and simplicity of God is the reason why He can produce many and diverse effects, just as he holds that the soul knows all things precisely because it is none of those things it knows. "The divine power is not limited to one effect; and this comes from its simplicity, for the

[8] Idem manifeste apparet ex defectu, quem in rebus cognoscendis quotidie experimur. Rerum enim sensibilium plurimas proprietates ignoramus, earumque proprietatum, quas sensu apprehendimus, rationem perfecte in pluribus invenire non possumus. Multo igitur amplius excellentissmae substantiae, transcendentis, omnia intelligibilia humana ratio investigare non sufficit. *C. G.*, l. 1, c. 3.

nearer a power is to unity, the nearer it is to infinity, and can extend itself to more objects."[9] The effects are in proportion to their cause and get their character from their most perfect cause. "Therefore the distinction in objects, in which consists the order of the universe (but the order of the universe is what is best in all created beings), is not the result of secondary causes but rather the intention of the First Cause."[10] Moreover the First Cause contributes more to the effect than the immediate secondary cause. "Every cause is in some manner the cause of being, either substantial or accidental. But nothing is the cause of being except in so far as it acts in the divine power. Therefore every cause operates through the power of God."[11] "God is more of a principal cause in each action than even the secondary

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[9] Virtus divina non limitatur ad unum effectum; et hoc ex ejus simplicitate provenit, quia quanto aliqua virtus est magis unita, tanto magis est infinita et ad plura se potest extendere. *C. G.*, 1. 2, c. 42.

[10] Non igitur rerum distinctio, in qua ordo universali (optimum autem in omnibus creatis est ordo universi) consistit, causatur ex causis secundis, sed magis ex intentione primae causae. *C. G.*, 1. 2, c. 42.

[11] Omne enim operans est aliquo modo causa essendi, vel secundum esse substantiale vel accidentale; Nihil autem est causa essendi, nisi in quantum agit in virtute divina. Omne igitur operans operatur per virtutem Dei. *C. G.*, 1. 3, c. 67.

agents."[12] There is, however, true secondary causality. "The causality of inferior effects is not attributed to the divine power in such a a way that the causality of the inferior causes is taken away."[13] Nor is the effect to be considered "as due, partly to God and partly to the natural agent; but the whole is from both under a different aspect, as the same whole effect is attributed to the instrument, and also the whole to the principal cause."[14]

This intimate presence of God in all activities will help us to understand the idea of the First Cause in the proofs for God's existence. There are two opinions on this point among those who hold that these proofs demonstrate God's existence. One maintains that the existence of God is proven from the fact that an infinite series of causes is impossible, and hence we must come to a First Cause, God. The other holds that the idea of the First Cause is valid independently of the series, and this, to our mind, is the view

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[12] Deus igitur principalius est causa cujuslibet actionis quam etiam secundae causae agentes. *C. G*, 1. 3, c. 67.

[13] Non ergo causalitas effectuum inferiorum est ita attribuenda divinae virtuti, quod subtrahatur causalitas inferiorum agentium. *C. G.*, 1. 3, c. 69.

[14] Non partim a Deo, partim a naturali agente fiat, sed totus ab utroque secundum alium modum; sicut idem effectus totus attribuitur instrumento, et principali agenti etiam totus. *C. G*, 1 3, c. 70.

of Aquinas, gathered from his general treatment of Causality. It might be called the *intensive* view. According to it, a thorough consideration and complete explanation of any effect will lead us to a knowledge of the First Cause, and thus we need not go through a series to find God at the end, and then only the First in the series. He is in every activity and can be known as the full explanation of the event. To the mind of St. Thomas, the proofs have efficacy even were there an infinite series, for he gives them as metaphysically demonstrative, and yet he admits the possibility, or rather the non-contradiction of the eternity of the world.[15] The important point to his mind is the understanding of the effect or effects given, for the simple but complete consideration of an effect is sufficient to reach the First Cause.

If this is true, then the objections raised on the score of the impossibility of conceiving an infinite series fall to the ground, for the simple reason that the existence of the First Cause in the view of Aquinas is not bound up with the infinite series. Prof. Huxley maintains, the First Cause is but the first of a series, with a causal character similar to the other members of the series; we can not reach a

[15] Cfr. Sertillanges, Preuve de l'existence de Dieu et l'eternité du monde. Revue Thomiste, Sept., 1897.

true First Cause according to him, for the process is one ad infinitum.[16] Nor is God a Cause in the sense of Deism, a transcendant Cause that created the world and now leaves it to itself. God is both transcendant and immanent. If we understand the meaning that Aquinas gives to the First Cause it will not be exact to say, as Caldecott does, that by the first and second proofs, "he (Aquinas) reaches only an initial Cause and does not bring out permanence of operations."[17] Caldecott says, however, that immanence is contained in the remaining arguments. It is but fair to admit that the two proofs as given say nothing of immanence, but their implication takes account of it. The proofs of St. Thomas are briefly stated; to understand their full content we must seek for light in other portions of his works. Any of the proofs carried to its complete expression would not only give us the existence of God, but likewise His nature in so far as we can know it. This close relation between existence and nature is often overlooked, especially by the Agnostic, who arrives at existence and then fails to use the privilege of deduction and analysis at his

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[16] Huxley's *Hume*, p. 149.

[17] Selections from the Literature of Theism, pp. 24, 26.

disposal to learn something of the nature of God. We now propose to utilize our birth-right.

SECTION III.—NATURE OF GOD.

The existence of God found as the result of the five proofs advanced by St. Thomas does not give us all we can know about Him, and thus it is, the work of elaboration just begins at this point. We repeat, that what follows is implicitly contained in the proofs, but its detailed exposition is the outcome of deduction and analysis. The same principle—that of causality—which proved there was a God, now goes further, and shows to what extent we can know the nature of God. The position of St. Thomas and Spencer offer a great contrast on this point, and it will be well to show in what way. Both admit a First Cause as the inevitable conclusion of a consideration of causality in the world, both admit manifestations of this Frst Cause; but here the agreement ends. Spencer says God is unknowable, though He manifests Himself—"the Power which the Universe manifests to us is utterly inscrutable"[1]—, St. Thomas says, God is knowable because of His manifestations—"whence we know God's relations to creatures

[1] *First Principles*, p. 46.

because He is the Cause of all, and how He differs from creatures since He is none of those things He has caused."[2] This divergence is emphasized at various points, and we shall note them as occasion demands. "Each assertion respecting the nature, acts, or motives of that power which the Universe manifests to us, has been repeatedly called in question, and proved to be inconsistent with itself, or with accompanying assertions. Yet each of them has been age after age insisted on, in spite of a secret consciousness that it would not bear examination."[3] For Aquinas, notwithstanding, God is knowable. He is knowable in Himself; and He is knowable relatively to us in a given manner and to a certain extent.

We do not know God in himself, we do not know Him comprehensively, nor intuitively, yet we know Him really, to a certain extent. The proofs have given us some idea of God; they have shown Him to be an existent Something, a Being of some sort. We have shown that being is the prime and adequate object of the intellect, hence God as being is knowable to the

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[2] Unde cognoscimus de ipso habitudinem ipsius ad creaturam, quod scilicet omnium est causa; et differentiam creaturarum ab ipso, quod scilicet ipse non est aliquid eorum quae ab eo causantur. *Sum Theol.*, I, q. 12, a. 12.

[3] Spencer, *Ibid.* p. 101.

human intellect. But the proportionate object of our intellect is not being as such, but the essence of material things, hence our knowledge of God must be based on a consideration of material things. A thing is knowable in se and it is knowable in relation to us. "Every real existence has two sides, being-for-itself and being-for-others."[4] This distinction in our present question brings to view two of the general principles of knowledge: Immateriality, which determines the degrees of the knowableness of an object in se considered; and, all that is known, is known according to the nature of the knower, all our knowledge is in terms of our own intellect.

God in Himself is infininely knowable, because He is supremely actual. "Because God is the opposite extreme of matter, because He is entirely immune from all potentiality, it follows that He knows and is knowable in the highest degree."[5] The role of immateriality in knowledge has already been discussed; the proofs give us God as Actus Purus, Pure Actuality, and thus He is knowable in Himself as infiinitely as He knows Himself. "Since God is most immaterial, it follows that He is in the height

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[4] A. Seth, Some Epistemological Conclusions, *Phil. Rev.*, v. 3, p. 57.

[5] *De Veri.*, q. 2, a. 2. *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 14, a. 1.

of cognition." In addition to what has been said previously, we shall refer to the question of matter and form when presenting the ideas contained in the attributes of Infinity and Omniscience.

The phrase "God in Himself" has been criticised by Prof. Flint as meaningless, but it has a real significance as we find it in the works of Aquinas. "We can not know the 'God in Himself' of sundry sages and divines, for the simple but sufficient reason that there is no such God to know."[6] He calls this "God in Himself" as vain as Kant's "thing-in-itself". When he states what He considers the only intelligible use of the phrase, he simply presents what was clear to the mind of Aquinas and those who follow him in this question. "There is no God without powers, affections, attributes, relationships; and when viewed in these—in His omnipotence and omniscience, His holiness and love, His Creatorship, Fatherhood, or Sovereignty—He is viewed "in Himself", in the only true and reasonable sense,—that is, as distinct not from His own characteristics, but from other beings."[7] This is the idea of God derived from created things, of which St.

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[6] Flint, *Agnosticism*, p. 580.

[7] *Ibid.*, p. 582.

Thomas says: "We can know God's relation to creatures, because He is the cause of all; we can know how He differs from creatures because He is none of those things He has caused, and He is none of them, not through defect on His part but through supereminence."[8] The knowledge of God in se, of God in Himself, is unattainable by us, is an extent beyond us, of which St. Thomas says—"to show the ignorance of this sublime knowledge it is said of Moses that 'he approached to the darkness in which God was'."[9] We know God only by His manifestations, as Prof. Flint says, but this does not preclude other means of knowledge, means not given us in our present condition.

When we come to consider our actual knowledge of God, we see it is neither comprehensive nor intuitive. We comprehend a thing when "we know it as far as it is knowable."[10] "To comprehend a power or capacity is to know its complete extension."[11] There is nothing that

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[8] *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 12, a. 12

[9] Ad hujus sublimissimae cognitionis ignorantiam demonstrandam, de Moyse dicitur (Exod., 20: 21) quod accessit ad caliginem in qua erat Deus. *C. G.*, l. 3, c. 49.

[10] Omne autem quod comprehenditur ab aliquo cognoscente, cognoscitur ab eo ita perfecte sicut cognoscibile est. *C. G.*, l. 3, c. 35.

[11] Idem igitur est cognoscere omnia in quae potest aliqua virtus, et ipsam virtutem comprehendere. *C. G*, l. 3, c. 56.

can exhaust the divine nature or mirror it perfectly, because—and this is the sole and oft-repeated answer—there is no effect that adequates the power of the Cause, no creature is a full copy of its Creator, no creature is God. "It is impossible for any created likeness to totally represent God. There is something which each and all creatures leave unexpressed, and yet this is a something which is contained in the conception God in Himself. God is as truly incomprehensible as He is truly knowable. "God is knowable but not to the extent that His essence is comprehended, because the knower has a knowledge of the object known not according to the nature of the object but according to his own nature. But the nature of no creature attains to the height of the Divine Majesty Itself. Whence it follows, no creature knows Him perfectly as He perfectly knows Himself."[12] We do not know God comprehensively, but we are ever getting a clearer and a wider knowledge of Him, conscious, however, that there will always be a

[12] Deus cognoscibilis est non autem ita cognoscibilis, ut essentia sua comprehendatur. Quia omne cognoscens habet cognitionem de re cognita, non per motum rei cognita sed per modum cognoscentis. Modus autem nullius creaturae attingit ad altitudinem divinae majestatis. Unde oportet quod a nullo perfecte cognoscatur, sicut ipse seipsum perfecte cognoscit. *Com. on Lomb.*, I, Dis. 3, q. 1, a. 1.

limit—the necessary distance between uncreated and created existence. "Through effects we know God's existence, that He is the Cause of others, above others, and distinct from all. This is the limit and most perfect stage of our knowledge in this life, whence, as Dionysius says, we are united to a God as it were unknown. This is true even when we know what God is not, for what He is remains entirely unknown."[13]

This last thought seems a discouraging conclusion, and apparently renders further quest useless. Did St. Thomas confound a simple, partial knowledge with a comprehensive one as do Agnostics, he would be forced to stop with Spencer at the mere existence of God and declare Him unknowable beyond this point. Before we detail the actual knowledge that man can attain of God's nature, we must show that Intuitionism and Ontologism are not the means of acquiring this knowledge.

Ontologism, or the immediate vision of God, held by Malebranche, Gioberti, and Rosmini, is practically identical with the Innate-idea view when there is a question of our knowledge of God. In general, it brings God and the human mind in immediate conscious contact; it does

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[13] *C. G.*, l. 3, c, 49.

away with all intermediate ideas between God and the human soul; it considers God the first object of our thought and the first object that we know; it holds that we see God immediately, and from this intuition, as origin and source, arises all our intellectual knowledge.

According to Malebranche, we see our ideas or universals in God. Sensation for him does not constitute the first stage of knowledge; in fact, it has no direct function in knowledge. He maintains that we know all things in their ideas, that these ideas are particular determinations of the idea of being in general, and this idea of indeterminate being is the idea of God. For Gioberti, God is the first object that we know, and we know Him immediately; He is both the *primum ontologicum* and the *primum logicum*—the first existence, and the first known. His formula, *Ens Creat Existentias* —Being creates existences—details this immediate intuition. We know Being—the self-existing Divinity, we know It as creative, and we know the result of this creative action, viz., existences. For him, then, our "first intellectual act is an intuition of God creating the world." Gioberti distinguishes direct and reflex knowledge, and is followed in this matter by subsequent Ontologists. The first or direct intuition of God, who is the first object known,

is obscure and indeterminate, but by means of sensation and intercourse with men, this intuition becomes clear, determined, and then we have reflex knowledge. Rosmini's theory, that the idea of being is innate in us has made him an Ontologist, for this idea is the "idea of God, the creative cause of finite beings."[14]

The view of Ontologism is in opposition to the theory of Aquinas. All our ideas arise from material things; the essence of material things is the first and proper object of the intellect, and it is only by the resemblance and contrasts of these sensible objects that we come to a knowledge of spiritual things, and of God. "Since the human intellect, according to our present condition in life, cannot understand created immaterial substances, much less can it understand the essence of an uncreated substance. Therefore we must simply say that God is not the *primum* known by us, but rather we come to a knowledge of God through creatures. . . But the first object of our knowledge in this life is the quiddity of a material thing, which is the object of our intellect, as has been said so often."[15] Our manner of knowing

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[14] Boedder, *Natural Theology*, p. 14.

[15] Cum intellectus humanus secundum statum praesentis vitae non possit intelligere substantias immateriales creatas, multo minus potest intelligere essentiam substantiae in-

which must be in accordance with our nature —for the object known is in the knower according to the nature of the knower—renders it impossible that God should be immediately known to us, or be the first object of our knowledge. Though every mind is concerned with all being, yet it is not being in general which is the specific or immediate object of every knower, but being under the condition that corresponds most nearly with the nature of the knower. Thus man who is a composite of soul and body can not know spirit immediately or primarily, for it does not correspond the most readily to his nature; he can only form a direct concept of those things which are proportioned to his nature. We have sensible and intellectual powers of knowledge, and our knowledge comes through the senses; thus it is impossible that we should have an immediate vision of God.

St. Thomas rejects Ontologism in express words. "Some have said that the first thing which is known by the human mind in this life is God Himself, who is the first truth, and that

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creatae. Unde simpliciter dicendum est, quod Deus non est primum a nobis, cognoscitur; sed magis per creaturas in Dei cognitionem pervenimus. . . Primum autem quod intelligitur a nobis secundum statum praesentis vitae, est quidditas rei materialis, quae est nostri intellectus objectum, ut multoties supra dictum est. *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 87, a. 3.

through this all other things are known. But this is manifestly false, for to know God through His essence is the beatitude of man, whence it would follow that every man is happy."[16] The seeing of God in His essence is logically contained in Ontologism, though its supporters explicitly assert we do not thus see God. In God all things are one, there are no distinctions —"one is the first of beings possessing the full perfection of all being, which we call God."[17] If Ontologism were true, it would follow that no one could err—"since in the Divine Essence all things that are said of it are one, no one could err in those matters which are spoken of God; experience proves this to be evidently false."[18] Experience proves that we have no immediate vision of God, and the very concept we have is the result of a process far from intuitive, or identical with immediate knowledge. "Moreover, what is first in intellectual knowl-

[16] Quidam dixerunt quod primum quod a mente humana cognoscitur etiam in hac vita, est ipse Deus qui est veritas prima, et per hunc omnia alia cognoscuntur. Sed hoc aperte est falsum: quia cognoscere Deum per essentiam est hominis beatitudo, unde sequeretur omnem hominem beatum esse. *Super Boetium De Trinitate*, c. 1, ad 3. (*Opusculum* 68).

[17] Unum est primum entium, totius esse perfectionem plenam possidens quod Deum dicimus. *C. G.*, 1. 3, c. 1.

[18] Cum in divina essentia omnia quae dicuntur de ipsa sint unum, nullus erraret circa ea, quae de Deo dicuntur, quod experimento patet esse falsum. *Opus.* 68.

edge ought to be most certain";[19] but the very discussion and divergence of opinion regarding the concept and nature of God show that we have no immediate vision of Him.

We are now ready to present the treatment that Aquinas has given the nature of God, in the light of our knowledge. If we consider the proofs of God's existence simply in their formal character, regard only the explicit ideas they contain, we see at once we have nothing like a satisfactory or complete concept of God. How indefinite the designation at the close of each line of evidence! The words, *ens* or *aliquid*, being or something, are as close as we are admitted to gaze at the object of our search. Though it is true there is specification to the extent of saying this ens or something is Prime Mover, First Cause, Necessary Being, Perfect Being, Intelligent Being, yet there is not the confidence of assertion that we look for in a final statement of the greatest, most interesting, and most far-reaching of problems. Again, he simply says, and this we call God. There is, however, a great deal implied in these statements, or more correctly in the underlying thought of the proofs, and this admits of an explicit unfolding, at the end of which we shall have our

[19] Iterum ea, quae sunt prima in cognitione intellectus oportet esse certissima. *Opus.* 68.

concept as complete as it left the hands of Aquinas, and, to our mind, as satisfying as we can hope to make our concept of God in this life.

The basic thought of the proofs, the idea that contains in itself the various predications that an analysis of it makes clear, has been given us by St. Thomas himself; and the method used in developing it is plainly stated and thoroughly carried out. The proofs have shown, says Aquinas, "that there is some *primum ens* which we call God. We must consider its attributes,"[20] we must analyze it. This is the general idea, and the method used in specifying it is the method of remotion or elimination. In the same chapter we have another phrase for the primum ens: "In proceeding in our knowledge by the method of remotion, we shall accept the principle (which was demonstrated in the proofs) that God is *omnino immobilis* (omnino immutabilis)."[21]

By deduction and analysis, by the *a priori* method, St. Thomas analyses the primum ens

[20] Ostenso igitur, quod est aliquod primum ens, quod Deum dicimus, oportet ejus conditiones investigare. *C. G.*, l. 1, c. 14.

[21] Ad procedendum, igitur circa Dei cognitionem per viam remotionis, accipiamus principium (id, quod ex superioribus jam monstratum est), scilicet quod Deus sit omnino immobilis. *C. G.*, l. 1, c. 14.

of the proofs to see what further knowledge we can have of God. He realizes fully the difficulty of the present operation, for there may be error at each step. In a few introductory sentences to the third question of the first part of the Summa Theologica, he maps out his position very well, saying, we shall rather consider what God is not than seek to know what He is. The same attitude is shown at the opening of the analysis of the idea in his Contra Gentes. "It is the way of remotion, the process of elimination, that we are to use in considering the Divine Nature. For the Divine Substance by its immensity exceeds every form which our intellect attains. And thus we cannot apprehend it by knowing what it is, but we have some knowledge of it by knowing what it is not."[22] True to the theory of knowledge, this question is pursued in terms of the constitution of our minds, it is what our intellect can attain through a consideration of things about us.

What is this method of remotion? What part does it play in our knowledge? It is one of the three ways employed by St. Thomas in discus-

[22] Est autem via remotionis utendum, praecipue in consideratione divinae substantiae. Nam divina substantia omnem formam, quam intellectus noster attingit, sua immensitate excedit; et sic ipsam apprehendere non possumus cognoscendo quid est, sed aliqualem ejus habemus notitiam cognoscendo quid non est. *C. G.*, l. 1, c. 14.

sing what attributes can be applied to God, to find out what is contained in the primum ens. The other two ways are called ways of causality and eminence. Causality is the most universal, since the whole question of God is discussed in its terms; eminence implies that all predications of God have a meaning beyond or more extensive than the words themselves denote when applied to creatures, or our understanding of them contains—in God their full connotation is reached. The way of remotion, however, is characteristic of the process under consideration, since, as Aquinas says, we are rather seeking to know what God is not than what He is. We repeat, it is included under the way of causality.

The method of remotion might be likened to the work of the active intellect, as already suggested. We saw that the active intellect was engaged in rendering the phantasma or image intelligible, by removing from it the material conditions that prevent it from being known by the intellect proper; it eliminated the elements that forbade the union of the knower and the known, it brought to view the essence, the real nature of the object, which alone is knowable directly by the intellect. In our present question, the process is negative, but the result is *positive*, as St. Thomas takes

care to point out. "The more we can remove from an object by our intellect the nearer we approach to a knowledge of it; the more differences we see in an object in comparison with other things, the more perfectly we know it, for everything has a specific being distinct from all others."[23] This specific being is reached by knowing the genus under which it is included, and "by the differences by which it is distinguished from other things."

In the case of God, there is no genus under which He can be placed, "nor can we distinguish Him from other things by affimative differences, but only through negative ones."[24] Every difference, whether affirmative or negative, contracts or limits the object, and allows us "to approach nearer to a complete designation of the object." This method is thus applied: "If we say that God is not accident, we distinguish Him from all accidents; then if we add that He is not body, we mark Him off from

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[23] Tanto enim ejus notitiae magis appropinquamus, quanto plura per intellectum nostrum ab eo poterimus removere; tanto enim unumquodque perfectius cognoscimus, quanto differentias ejus alia plenius intuemur; habet enim res unaquaeque in seipsa esse proprium ab omnibus aliis distinctum. *C. G.*, l. 1, c. 14.

[24] Nec distinctionem ejus aliis rebus per affirmativas differentias accipere possumus, oportet eam accipere per differentias negativas. *Ibid.*

some substances. And thus we might, through negations of this nature, separate Him, step by step, from all that is not Himself. This will indeed give us a specific view of His substance, since He will be known as distinct from all, yet our knowledge will not be perfect, we shall not know what He is in Himself."[25] Spencer declares God unthinkable, because we can find no marks or characters that distinguish Him from objects we know. He lays down the canon: "Whence it is manifest that a thing is perfectly known only when it is in all respects like certain things previously observed; that in proportion to the number of respects in which it is unlike them, is the extent to which it is unknown; and that hence when it has absolutely no attribute in common with anything else, it must be absolutely beyond the bounds of knowledge."[26] This sounds very much like the statement of St. Thomas just quoted, but when Spencer applies these principles to

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[25] Si dicimus Deum non accidens, per hoc quod ab omnibus accidentibus distinguitur. Deinde, si addamus ipsum non esse corpus, distinguemus ipsum etiam in aliquibus substantiis; et sic per ordinem, ab omni eo quod est praeter ipsum, per negationes hujusmodi, distinguetur; et tunc de substantia ejus erit propria consideratio, quum cognoscetur ut ab omnibus distinctus. Non tamen erit perfecta cognitio, quia non cognoscitur quid in se sit. *Ibid.*

[26] *First Prin.*, p. 80.

God by way of corollary the agreement is at an end.

"A thought involves relation, difference, likeness. Whatever does not present each of these does not admit of cognition. And hence we may say that the Unconditioned, as presenting none of them, is trebly unthinkable."[27] For Aquinas, the Unconditioned or God presents all three of them in some way, and thus is trebly thinkable. We have just shown how God is known on the principle of remotion, by differences; relation and likeness will be considered soon.

The method of remotion or elimination is but one of three, as already remarked; these three supplement each other to such an extent that they are practically inseparable. The three conditions of thought laid down by Spencer are fulfilled in this three-fold method, and thus make the Agnostic unknowable knowable. When we ascribe an attribute to God which means knowledge of God to the extent of the attribute, we rest on the fact that God, as everything else, can only be known by what

[27] Spencer, *Ibid.*, p. 82.
Fiske repeats the same idea. "Upon what grounds did we assert the unknowableness of Deity? We were driven to the conclusion that Deity is unknowable, because that which exists independently of intelligence and out of relation to it, which presents neither likeness, difference, nor relation, cannot be cognized. *Outlines of Cosmic Phil.*, v. 2, p. 413.

He manifests of Himself. His manifestations appealing "to our intellects leads us to know what we are able to know of Him. God is known to us from creatures by the relation of cause, by way of eminence, and remotion."[28] We name an object as it is known to our intellect, for names or "words are referred to what they signify by means of an intellectual conception."[29] How does God manifest Himself? Through creatures, through the objects in the world about us. A consideration of these objects leads us to an ultimate explanation of them, to their cause—God. If we are to know more of this Cause, we must learn from all our experiences, for we can name Him only as these make Him known.

We can not, however, rise at once from a consideration of a given class of objects to an attribute appropriate to God. The knowledge we derive from creation does not lift us immediately to a knowledge of the final Object, Source, and End of all. St. Thomas lays down certain rules which are to guide us in this matter—they have been called Canons of Attribution.

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[28] Deus cognoscitur a nobis ex creaturis secundum habitudinem principii, et modum excellentiae et remotionis. *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 13, a. 1.

[29] Voces referuntur ad res significandas mediante conceptione intellectus. *Ibid.*

They safeguard the separate existence of God, and also, as Caldecott points out, ward off the imputation of Anthropomorphism. God, for Aquinas, is infinite perfection, hence we can apply no name to Him that will derogate from this character.[30] Every name that implies perfection without connoting imperfection, is applied to God in the proper and the full sense of the word; this name, however, is applied to Him in an eminent way, which is not at all applicable to creatures; finally, words connoting imperfection may be applied to God metaphorically. We have here the ideas of God as Cause, all else as effects, and the relation between the two. We can compare God and creatures because they are similar in *some way*, but the result of our comparison can only be expressed *analogically*.

When we discussed the question of causality in general, we saw that there was some similarity between the cause and the result of its operation, based on the axiom—omne agens agit sibi simile. This similarity may be one of quality or one of proportion; in the former there is specific or generic likeness, in the latter there is an analogical likeness. We also saw

[30] God is infinite perfection, since as Cause of all things, He contains in Himself in some way all effects. Cfr. *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 4, a. 2.

that the cause is known by the effect it produces, and this is the only way we know it—thus we know it by its actual exercise. The activity of an agent is its forma, and this is simply the divine likeness in things; "for since the form is that which gives being or existence to a thing, but each thing, in as far as it has being, approaches to the likeness of God who is simple Being itself, it is necessary that the form be nothing else than the divine likeness participated in things."[31] The common element of likeness, then, between God and creatures is that of Being. There is no generic or specific agreement, but one "according to some analogy, as being is common to all. In this manner those things which are of God, as First and Universal Cause of all being, are likened to Him in as far as they are beings."[32]

The idea of relation is closely connectd with

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[31] Cum enim forma sit secundum quam res habet esse: res autem quaelibet, secundum quod habet esse, accedat ad similitudinem Dei, qui est ipsum suum esse simplex; necesse est quod forma nihil est aliud quam divina similitudo participata in rebus. *C. G.*, 1. 3, c. 97.

[32] Si igitur sit aliquod agens, quod non in genere contineatur, effectus ejus adhuc magis remote accedat ad similitudinem formae agentis: non tamen ita quod participet similitudinem formae agentis secundum eamdem rationem speciei aut generis, sed secundum aliqualem analogiam; sicut ipsum esse est commune omnibus. Et hoc modo illa quae sunt a Deo, assimilantur ei, inquantum sunt entia, et primo et universali principio totius est. *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 4, a. 3.

similarity in this question of analogy. We have seen that knowledge implies a relation or union of knower and known. When we come to seek a knowledge of God, how is this relation to be understood? If God or the Absolute is defined as the unrelated, then we are at a standstill in our discussion; and Spencer truly remarks—"It is impossible to put the Absolute in the category with anything relative so long as the Absolute is defined as that of which no necessary relation can be predicated."[33] St. Thomas discusses this point by means of a distinction. He says there are two kinds of relation—real or actual, and conceptual. In a relation there are two terms or extremes, the subject and the object, and the foundation or basis that connects them both—the reason why one is referred to or related to the other. If both terms are real, the relation is real—this real relation exists in things independently of the operation of the intellect. The relation is conceptual or *relatio rationis* when one term is real and the other only a concept—this relation depends on the consideration of our mind. On the basis of this distinction, we know how far we can attribute to God what we see in creatures. The real relation contains the idea of something in

[33] *First Prin.*, p. 81. Cfr. Bowne, *Metaphysics*, p. 116.

both terms, each term contributing something to the relation, as the relation of mover and moved. In the conceptual, there is the idea of unchangeableness in one term and change only in the other. St. Thomas says, to determine whether an animal is on the left or on the right side of a column does not depend on any change in the column but on the changed position of the animal. This element of fixedness he applies to God—"Since God, therefore, is beyond the whole order of creatures, and all creatures are ordained to Him and not conversely, it is manifest that creatures are related to God Himself, but there is no real relation of God to creatures, but one of concept only, in so far as creatures are related to Him."[34] Thus, whatever names we apply to God are not based on "any change in Him, but on change in creatures." Strictly speaking then, we cannot say that God is like creatures, though the reverse is true; and this rests on the fact that God in no way depends on creatures, He receives absolutely nothing from them. God is like a standard that measures the perfections of all objects, and as we speak of objects re-

[34] Cum igitur Deus sit extra totum ordinem creaturae, et omnes creaturae ordinentur ad ipsum, et non e converso; manifestum est quod creaturae realiter referuntur ad ipsum Deum; sed in Deo non est aliqua realis relatio ejus ad creaturas; sed secundum rationem tantum, inquantum, creaturae referuntur ad ipsum. *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 13, a. 7.

sembling their standard more or less closely, but not of the standard resembling the objects —though they have points that are common to a certain degree—so God is not spoken of as similar to creatures, but conversely.

The contradiction that Spencer, quoting Mansel, finds in the ideas of Cause and Absolute and Infinite, are not born of a proper understanding of the terms. If the meaning he gives them were true, then we certainly could not know the Absolute. Ladd justly remarks: "All philosophy or attempt at philosophy, even the most agnostic, necessarily assumes some sort of conscious mental relation of man to the Absolute; but on the other hand, all philosophy or attempt at philosophy, however dogmatic, is forced to acknowledge some sort of a limit beyond which any such relation as can properly be called 'knowledge' can not be claimed to extend." He gives certain definitions of the Absolute which of their very nature render knowledge of It out of the question. If the Absolute is designated as the totally unrelated there is no knowledge to be had of it. The Absolute must have some content, can not be an abstraction—"That which has no positive characteristics that are presentable or representable in consciousness, can not be known." Another unknowable form—"You

can not know, or know about, the Absolute, if by this term you mean to designate the negation of all positive or particular characteristics." While we agree with these statements, there is one aspect we can not endorse—"Nor is knowledge of the Absolute possible if this word must be identified with the unchanging,—with that which is absolved from all alterations of its own states or of the relations in which those states stand to human consciousness."[35] In addition to what has already been said, the further presentation of the view of Aquinas will show that our knowledge of the Absolute does not require change in the Absolute. We can apply certain attributes to Him, derived from a consideration of His manifestations.

Are these attributes the same in kind in God and creatures, or is it a matter of degree only? The general answer is obvious. God who is independent and self-existent Being, and creatures who are essentially dependent and caused can not be classed together, as Spencer justly remarks. "Between the creating and the created there must be a distinction transcending any of the distinctions existing between different divisions of the created."[36] And here Spencer finds another reason for calling God

[35] *Phil.* of *Knowledge*, pp. 593, 594, 595, 596, 597.
[36] *First Prin.* p. 81.

unknowable: knowledge implies classification, but God can not be classed with the created, and hence we can not know Him. St. Thomas has the same distinction "between the creating and the created", but by analogy and eminence, he finds that God is knowable in some way. "We can not know the truth of divine things", says Aquinas, "according to their nature, hence it must be known according to our own nature. But it is connatural to us to arrive at the intelligible from the sensible . . . that from those things that we know, the soul may rise to the unknown. We know more truly what God is not than what He is . . . hence what we say of God is not to be understood as proper to Him in the same manner as it is found in creatures, but through some manner of imitation and likeness. The eminence of God is more expressly shown by removing from Him what is most manifest to us, material things".[37] The likeness is not a "participation of the same form . . .

[37] Non possumus veritatem divinorum secundum modum suum capere; et ideo oportet quod nobis secundum modum nostrum proponatur. Est autem nobis connaturale a sensibilibus in intelligibilia venire . . ut ex his quae novimus ad incognita animus surgat . . . De Deo verius cognoscimus quid non est, quam quid est. Et ideo cum de omnibus quae de Deo dicimus, intelligendum sit quod non eodem modo sibi conveniunt, sicut in creaturis inveniuntur, sed per aliquem modum imitationis et similitudinis; expressius ostendebatur hujusmodi eminentia Dei, per ea quae sunt magis manifesta ab ipso removeri. Haec autem sunt corporalia. *Com. on Lomb.*, I, Dis. 34, q. 3, a. 1.

but it is a certain likeness of proportion, which consists in the same relation of proportions, as when we say eight is to four as six is to three, and the mayor is to the city what a pilot is to a ship."[38]

The attributes applied to God and creatures have a relation of proportion—we do not grasp their full expression in the Divine Being, though we seem to do so when they are found in creatures. "When the name wise is applied to a man, it in a way circumscribes and comprehends the thing signified, but not so in the case of God, where the thing signified still remains as uncomprehended and exceeding the signification of the name."[39] "Since God is His being which no creature is," His relation to being and all attributes differs from that of creatures, "for what is in God simply and immaterially is in the creature materially and

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[38] Quaedam similitudo enim est per participationem ejusdem formae; et talis similitudo non est corporalium ad divina. Est etiam quaedam similitudo proportionalitatis: sicut se habent octo ad quattuor, ita sex ad tria et sicut se habet gubernator ad navem. *Ibid.* ad 2.

[39] Cum hoc nomen, sapiens, de homine dicitur, quodammodo circumscribit et comprehendit rem significatam; non autem cum dicitur de Deo; sed relinquit rem significatam ut incomprehensam et excedentem nominis significatam. *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 13, a. 5.

manifoldly."[40] "It then follows that attributes are applied to God and creatures according to analogy, that is proportion. . . And thus whatever is said of God and creatures is said as there is some relation of the creature to God as to a principle and cause, in which preexist excellently all the perfections of things. . . In those things which are said analogically, there is not one concept as in univocals, but the name which is used manifoldly signifies diverse proportions to one thing."[41] This proportion or relation of objects in the analogical sense is not, as St. Thomas points out, based on an agreement to something distinct from the two objects related, and which "must be something prior to both, to which both are related," but is reference based on something found in each, "where the

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[40] Deus autem alio modo se habet ad esse quam aliqua alia creatura; nam ipse est suum esse, quod nulli alii creaturae competit. Cum quod in Deo est immaterialiter et simpliciter, in creaturis sit materialiter et multipliciter. *Pot.*, q. 7, a. 7.

[41] Dicendum est igitur quod hujusmodi nomina dicuntur de Deo et creaturis, secundum analogiam, id est proportionem. . . Et sic quidquid dicitur de Deo et creaturis, dicitur secundum quod est aliquis ordo creaturae ad Deum, ut ad principium ad causam, in quae praeexistunt excellenter omnes rerum perfectiones. . . Neque enim in his quae analogice dicuntur, est una ratio, sicut est in univocis . . . sed nomen quod sic multipliciter dicitur, significat diversas proportiones ad aliquid unum. *Sum. Theol.*, q. 13, a. 5.

one is prior to the other." In God and creatures the basis of analogy is the relation of cause and effect—"nothing is prior to God, and He is prior to the creature." There is then a reason for saying that "good and other qualities are predicated commonly of God and creatures," and that is, because "the divine essence is the superexcellent likeness of all things."[42]

God as First Cause contains in absolute perfection the shadowings of Himself, yet St. Thomas remarks that the unchangeableness of God is not affected by this: for He is wise and good and the like, antecedently and independently of the existence of these qualities in creatures. These predications are not simply a matter of degree, nor yet do they wholly differ in kind; still we can see that we have a peculiar case here in the relation of creatures to God. God occupies a position that nothing else can occupy, as regards what is known to us, and consequently we are on solid ground while we mount from human considerations to a knowledge of the Divine. It is not hard for us—if it is not rather a necessity—to admit that our feeble utterances find a realization in God much beyond

[42] Divina essentia est omnium rerum similitudo superexcellens. Et ex hoc modo similitudinis contingit quod bonum et hujusmodi praedicantur communiter Deo et creaturis. *Pot.*, q. 7, a. 7 ad 6.

anything we can see here in creation, and that the phrase, God is all this eminently, is happily and suggestively chosen. On the strength of the view of Aquinas just presented, the questions of J. S. Mill may be understood at their true value. "To say that God's goodness may be different in kind from man's goodness, what is it but saying, with a slight change of phraseology, that God may possibly not be good?" And again, "I will call no Being good, who is not what I mean when I apply that epithet to my fellow creatures."[43] God is all that creatures are and eminently more; this method of eminence leads us as near to a proper or quiddative concept of God as we can reach.

We have then a right to attribute to God certain qualities on the basis of creatures, because there is some similarity between the effects and their causes. The effects are many, and thus offer various ways of approach to a specification of our Idea of God. Moreover, the nature of our intelligence is such that we can not grasp the essence of anything at once, but it is only by degrees that we arrive at a complete knowledge of it, in so far as it is knowable to us. This is all the more true in our dealings with the nature of God—we *stammer* rather

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[43] Quoted by Fiske, *Outlines of Cosmic Phil.*, v. 2, p. 407.

than speak. Yet we must not forget, that though our Conception of God is a human concept, as all our concepts must be, yet it is a true Concept of God, as far as we can attain it. St. Thomas thus expresses this matter: "Our intellect apprehends divine perfections in the manner in which they exist in creatures, and it names them as it apprehends them. In the names, therefore, that we give to God we must consider two things — the perfections themselves that are signified, as gooodness, life, and so on, and the manner of signifying them." The perfections themselves as perfections "are properly applied to God, even more properly than to creatures, and are predicated of Him with priority",[44] since He is the Cause; but the manner of predication depends on the nature of our mind. This distinction seems to answer fully the misgivings of Prof. Royce about the adequacy of the treatment of St. Thomas regarding the divine attributes.[45] "Our intellect since it knows God from creatures, to under-

[44] Intellectus autem noster eo modo apprehendit eas secundum quod sunt in creaturis; et secundum quod apprehendit, ita significat per nomina. In nominibus igitur quae Deo attribuimus, est duo considerare scilicet perfectiones ipsas significatas, ut bonitatem, vitam et hujusmodi; et modum significandi. Quantum igitur ad id quod significant hujusmodi nomina proprie competunt Deo, et magis proprie quam ipsis creaturis; et per prius dicuntur de eo. *Sum. Theol.*, I. q. 13, a. 3.

[45] *Cfr.* pp. 30, 31.

stand God, forms conceptions proportioned to the perfections proceeding from God to creatures. These perfections preexist in God unitedly and simply, in creatures they are divided and manifold . . . To the various and multiple conceptions of our intellect, there is but one principle, altogether simple, imperfectly understood by those conceptions."[46] This sounds like Anthropomorphism.

In one sense, as so many Theists have pointed out, all our knowledge is anthropomorphic, for the simple reason that we must think as *anthropoi*, as men. Martineau writes: "In every doctrine therefore, it is still from our microcosm that we have to interpret the macrocosm; and from the type of our humanity as presented in self knowledge, there is no more escape for the pantheist or materialist than for the theist. Modify them as you may, all causal conceptions are born from within, as reflections or reductions of our personal, animal, or physical activity: and the severest science is in this sense, just as anthropomorphic as the most ideal theology."[47] Balfour, contrasting Theology and Science, says, "for controversial purposes it has been found convenient to dwell on the circumstance that our idea of the Deity is to a certain extent necessarily

[46] *Sum. Theol.*, I. q. 13, a. 3.

[47] *A Study of Religion*, v. 1, p. 336.

anthropomorphic while the no less certain, if somewhat less obvious, truth that an idea of the external world is also anthropomorphic, does not supply any ready argumentative weapon."[48] In this sense, our idea of God must be anthropomorphic, and no one should be surprised thereat. When, however, it is said we transfer to God simply and without any modification what we perceive in all experience, then Anthropomorphism ceases to be tenable.

Spencer finds a gradually diminishing Anthropomorphism in the history of religion, though, to his mind, it is still very prominent. "Indeed it seems somewhat strange," he says, "that men should suppose the highest worship to lie in assimilating the object of their worship to themselves. Not in asserting a transcendant difference, but in asserting a certain likeness, consists the element of their creed which they think essential."[49] We have already discussed the nature of likeness or similarity. He goes on to say, "It is still thought not only proper but imperative to ascribe (to God) the most abstract qualities of our nature. To think of the Creative Power as in all respects anthropomorphous, is now considered impious by men who yet hold themselves bound to think of the

[48] *Defence of Philosophic Doubt*, c. 12, p. 244.
[49] *First Prin.*, p. 109.

Creative Power as in some respects anthropomorphous, and who do not see that the one proceeding is but an evanescent form of the other."[50] This objection of Spencer is fully met by the Canons of Attribution laid down by St. Thomas, and especially, if we remember, that Aquinas considers our knowledge, and chiefly the principle of causality, as objective and universal.

We certainly do ascribe to God "the most abstract qualities of our nature", but we do this in a way that removes all suspicion that our Concept of God is not worthy of Him, according to His manifestations to us. In brief, by causality, we recognize God as containing all the perfections that we perceive in His works, by remotion or negation, we eliminate all imperfections as found in their human expression and arrive at a positive perfection, and then we ascribe this perfection to God in an eminent way — we say, it finds its realization in Him in a manner proper to a self-existent Being. This method avoids the charge of Anthropomorphism which has been justly made to those who have neglected it. "The omission of careful treatment of the method of application in the writings of many Englishmen who

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[50] *Ibid.*, p. 110.

belong to the Demonstrative School has laid them fairly open to the charge of anthropomorphism."[51] No true Theist would admit that his Conception of God is anthropomorphic, nothing is further from his mind than to conceive God in this way; he must then seek a form of presentation that will adequately express the view he holds. All Theists, in a way, betray signs of a proper conception, and if one ventures to question the insufficiency or incompleteness of their position by pointing out lacunae, they immediately reply, what you suggest is contained in my treatment. This attitude was emphasized in the discussion that followed Prof. Royce's lecture on The Conception of God, at the University of California. God was discussed under the Attribute of Omniscience. The criticism offered was, that other and essential attributes of God were ignored; Prof. Royce, in his reply, stated, that these were implied. This is but an illustration of the tendency to contract the Infinite and fit It into a mould that will contain any idea we choose to form of It. The desire for unity, for an all-embracing unity is a worthy one, but must not run counter to actual conditions.[52] We

[51] Caldecott. *The Phil. of Rel.*, p. 60. St. Thomas belongs to the Demonstrative School.

[52] Cfr. St. Thomas and Modern Thought, E. A. Pace, *Cath. Univ. Bulletin*, v. 2.

do not wish to say that one can not confine one's self to the discussion of a single attribute, but one should not seek a rounded concept in this way. It is contrary to the nature of our mind, and it is unfair to the subject.

Prof. Royce at the end of his argument claims that his position is essentially that of St. Thomas. The method, I think, is the same, granting the basis on which it rests, but the completed Concept is entirely different. As far as the single attribute Omniscience is concerned, from the author's premises, no fault is to be found with it, and, though rigorously speaking, it contains the other attributes, it is not satisfying to rest in it as there set forth. We propose, therefore, to present briefly the most important and essential attributes of God as found in Aquinas, and show how his Theory of Knowledge and Canons of Attribution are made use of in attaining these, and the result will be the rounded Concept of God according to St. Thomas.

SECTION IV.—APPLICATION OF PRINCIPLES.

The Concept of the Infinite. It was the supposed inadequacy of finite things to lead to a concept of the Infinite, that gave birth to Ontologism, which posits an immediate vision or intuition of God. The formation of this and

other concepts brings out clearly the need of a well-defined and consistent theory of knowledge, as well as the demand for methods that make for a legitimate application of the theory. "Our intellect in understanding, reaches to the infinite; as evidence we have the fact, for any given finite quantity, it can think a greater. This tendency of the intellect would be in vain, were there not some infinite intelligible thing. There must then be some infinite intelligible thing which must be the greatest of things; and this we call God. Again, the effect cannot extend beyond its cause. But our intellect can only come from God, who is the First Cause of all, therefore our intellect cannot think anything greater than God. If therefore we think something greater than every finite, it follows that God is not finite."[1] This is not the argument of St. Anselm, for its basis is the relation of cause and effect. Thus from finite things, from effects, through the operation of our intellect, we reach the Infinite.

How can finite things lead to the Infinite? Are we not simply piling finite upon finite as Locke held, and at most landing at the indefinite with a 'something beyond'? We cannot actually know infinite quantity, because "we could only understand it by receiving part after part . . .

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[1] *C. G.*, l. 1, c. 43.

and thus the infinite could not be known unless we enumerated all its parts, which is impossible."[2] This is not the idea of the infinite applied to God, for "God is not called Infinite privatively as quantity." Here enters the idea of matter and form, implying perfection and imperfection. "A thing is called infinite because it is not finite. Matter is made finite in a way through form, and form through matter. . . Matter is perfected through the form by which it is made finite, and thus the infinite as attributed to matter has the concept of the imperfect, for it is as matter without form. But form is not perfected through matter, but rather its amplitude is restricted, whence the infinite considered from the side of form not determined by matter has the concept of the perfect."[3] God then "is not called Infinite

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[2] (Infinitum) non potest intelligi nisi accipiendo partem post partem . . . et sic infinitum cognosci non posset actu, nisi omnes partes ejus numerarentur; quod est impossible. *Sum. Theol.*, I. q. 86, a. 2.

[3] Infinitum dicitur aliquid ex eo quod non est finitum. Finitur autem quodammodo et materia per formam, et forma per materiam. . . Materia autem perficitur per formam per quam finitur; et ideo infinitum secundum quod attribuitur materiae, habet rationem imperfecti; est enim quasi materia non habens formam. Forma autem non perficitur per materiam magis per eam ejus amplitudo contrahitur; unde infinitum, secundum quod se tenet ex parte formae non determinatae per materiam, habet rationem perfecti. *Sum. Theol.*, I. q. 7, a. 1.

privatively as quantity, for the infinite of this nature is reasonbly unknown, because it is as matter without form, which is the principle of knowledge. But He is called Infinite negatively, as form per se subsisting, not limited through receiving matter."[4] "The formal Infinite, which is God, is known in Himself, but unknown to us on account of the defect of our intellect, which in our present condition has a natural aptitude to know material things. And thus now we can know God only through material effects."[5] The difficulty arising from the disproportion of the finite and the infinite is answered on the basis of analogy or proportion, in as far as "proportion signifies some relation of one to another, either of matter to form or of cause to effect. Thus nothing forbids a proportion of the creature to God according to the relation of the understanding to the understood, as also according to the relation of the effect to the cause."[6] We might recall here the principle of knowledge, that the species is not the thing known primarily, but the object which it represents. It is finite of course,

[4] *C. G.*, l. 3, c. 54.

[5] Infinitum autem formale, quod est Deus, est secundum se notum; ignotum autem quoad nos, propter defectum intellectus nostri qui secundum statum praesentis vitae habet naturalem aptitudinem ad materialia cognoscenda. *Sum. Theol.*, I. q. 87, a. 2, ad 1.

[6] *C. G.*, l. 3, c. 54.

but it contains the object, the infinite, in the imperfect and negative way that we know it, and in so far gives us a true concept. The concept is positive also, though it is reached by way of remotion. Moreover, we see evidence here of the principle of knowledge—that all things are known according to the nature of the knower. We know God in our finite way, but the object known is the Infinite represented by the species. The ideas in this concept are—matter and form, imperfection and perfection. God is pure form without any matter, He is therefore perfect, infinitely perfect. We can know Him as infinite however, only through objects that have a material covering. We remove this material covering by abstraction and negation, and then we arrive at an idea of God under one aspect, that of Infinite Perfection.

God is Omniscient. Since "God is in the height of immateriality, it follows that he is on the summit of cognition." We have seen the position of immateriality in the theory of knowledge, it is the basis of knowledge for the knower and the known. "The immateriality of a thing is the reason of its knowableness, and the degree of knowledge depends on the degree of immateriality."[7] The discussion of

[7] Immaterialitas alicujus rei est ratio quod sit cognoscitiva; et secundum modum immaterialitatis est modus cognitionis. *Sum. Theol.* I. q. 14, a. 1.

the Infinite showed that God was pure form, and hence wholly immaterial, and thus infinitely knowable and knowing. "We find in the world many things moving through intelligence, it is then impossible that the Prime Mover be without intellect."[8] Again, irrational objects tend toward ends, and this is not by chance, hence this "end must be given them by another who is the founder of nature . . . but he could not give a purpose to nature unless he were intelligent."[9] God's knowledge and that of man differ. "Man has diverse cognitions according to the objects known.". His knowledge is successive, and admits of varying degrees of certitude, which he expresses by various names, as wisdom, intelligence, and the like. In God there is but a simple cognition to which we can apply these different names, yet in such a manner "that from each of them as they are used for divine predications we exclude what is of imperfection in it, and retain only what is of perfection."[10] "Everything that pertains to

[8] *C. G.*, l. 1, c 44.

[9] *Ibid.*, c. 56.

[10] Homo autem secundum diversa cognita, habet diversas cognitiones . . . Unde simplex Dei cognitio omnibus istis nominibus nominari potest; ita tamen quod ab unoquoque eorum, secundum quod in divinam praedicationem venit, secludatur quidquid imperfectionis est, et retineatur quidquid perfectionis est. *Sum. Theol.*, I. q. 14, a. 1 ad 2.

the imperfect mode proper to the creature must be excluded from the meaning of the name."[11] God is not simply intelligent, but He knows all things at once; "every intellect that understands one thing after another, is sometimes potentially intelligent and sometimes actually... But the Divine Intellect is never potentially, but always actually intelligent, hence it does not understand things successively, but it understands all things at once."[12] Prof. Royce says, the Being that is Omniscient "would behold answered, in the facts present to his experience, all rational, all logically possible questions. That is, for him, all genuinely significant, all truly thinkable ideas would be seen as truly fulfilled, and fulfilled in his own experience." Again, "His experience then, would form one whole, but the whole as such would fulfil an all-embracing unity, a single system of ideas."[13] But in what way is He all this? Here Prof. Royce goes astray. It is true he admits, that God has "richer ideas than our fragments of thoughts"; and he also truly remarks, "these things, wherein we taste the bitterness of our finitude, are what they are because they mean

[11] Quandocumque nomen sumptum a quacumque perfectione creaturae Deo attribuitur, secludatur ab ejus significatione omne illud quod pertinet ad imperfectum modum qui competit creaturae. *Ibid.*, ad 1.

[12] *C. G.*, l. 1, c. 56. [13] *Loc. cit.*, p. 10.

more than they contain, imply what is beyond them, refuse to exist by themselves, and at the very moment of confessing their own fragmentary falsity assure us of the reality of that fulfilment which is the life of God."[14] We can not, however, admit his statement when he enters into details, for he seems to find realized in his Omniscient Being things that St. Thomas was careful to exclude, by his method of remotion. The absence of this discrimination leads Prof. Royce to say, "the total limitation, the fragmentariness, the ignorance, the error,—yes (as forms or cases of ignorance and error), the evil, the pain, the horror, the longing, the travail, the faith, the devotion, the endless flight from its own worthlessness,—that constitutes the very essence of the world of finite experience, is, as a positive reality somewhere so experienced in its wholeness that this entire constitution of the finite appears as a world beyond which in its whole constitution, nothing exists or can exist."[15] "Evil, pain, horror", are not known as a "positive reality" for they are negations and imperfections, and hence find no place in God except through a knowledge of their opposites—"because God knows bona He also knows mala", for evil is "privatio

[14] *Ibid.*, pp. 14, 15.
[15] *Ibid.*, pp. 46, 47.

boni".[16] All imperfection and limitation must be removed from the Omniscient, the above quotation limits the Omniscient to the sole experience of the finite in its entirety, "beyond which, in its whole constitution, nothing exists or can exist." We have then in the Concept of the Omniscient according to St. Thomas, the ideas of immateriality and actuality, the requisites for knower and known. Our knowledge is perfect as it approximates to the full expression of these qualities; we know only through material conditions, we remove these and arrive at a knower, who, because He is on the apex of immateriality, is likewise on the summit of cognition.

God is Omnipotent. This attribute is but the extension of the action of the will. Apart from the identity of all perfection in God, St. Thomas frequently unites the ideas of intelligence and power. "Power is not attributed to God as something really different from His knowledge and will, only conceptually; power means the principle of executing the command of the will and the direction of the intelligence. These three are one in God."[17] Practically the same reasons

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[16] *Sum. Theol.*, I. q. 14, a. 10.

[17] Potentia non ponitur in Deo ut aliquid differens a scientia et a voluntate, secundum rem; sed solum secundum rationem; inquantum scilicet potentia importat rationem principii ex-

that lead us to ascribe Omniscience to God lead us to attribute Omnipotence to Him. We see the evidence of will in rational creatures, and we see the natural inclination of all things to an end; the short-comings and imperfections manifested in our endeavors, for we are often thwarted and only attain success by overcoming obstacles, bring us to a will where all this is absent, and where execution is co-extensive with rational determination. The idea of cause runs though the whole presentation of this attribute, and thus largely repeats what we have already said. "It is further manifest that everything according to its actuality and perfection is the active principle of something. . . God is pure act and simply and universally perfect, nor is there any imperfection in Him. . . In God therefore, is the highest power."[18] God is a cause that the effect cannot fully express, as we saw in the discussion of similitude. "God is not a univocal agent, for nothing agrees with Him

[18] Manifestum est enim unumquodque secundum quod est actu et perfectum, secundum hoc est principium activum alicujus. Deus est purus actus, et simpliciter et universaliter perfectus, neque in eo aliqua imperfectio locum habet. Unde maxime ei competit esse principium activum, et nullo modo pati. *Ibid.*, q. 25, a. 1.

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equentis id quod voluntas imperat, et ad quod scientia dirigit. Quae tria Deo secundum idem conveniunt. *Sum. Theol.*, I. q. 25, a. 1 ad 4.

specifically or generically. . . But the power of a non-univocal agent is not wholly expressed in the production of its effect."[19] Thus effects or creation do not express the limit of His power, for there is nothing to contrain Him to this full expression. We have then, a conception of free, infinite power, arrived at from a consideration of limited and imperfect power here below. The limitations are removed and we have Omnipotence.

God is a Person. The attribution of Personality to God sums up briefly the whole method of divine predication according to St. Thomas. "Person means what is perfect in all nature, viz., subsistence in a rational nature. Whence, since whatever partakes of perfection is to be attributed to God because His essence contains all perfection in itself, it is proper that this name person be predicated of God, but not in the same manner as it is said of creatures, but in a more excellent way."[20] The word person is not given

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[19] Deus non est agens univocum. Nihil enim aliud potest cum eo convenire neque in specie, neque in genere. . . Sed potentia agentis non univoci non tota manifestatur in sui effectus productione. *Ibid.*, a. 2 ad 2.

[20] Persona significat id quod est perfectissimum in tota natura; scilicet subsistens in rationali natura. Unde cum omne illud quod est perfectionis Deo sit attribuendum, eo quod ejus essentia continet in se omnem perfectionem, conveniens est ut hoc nomen persona de Deo dicatur; non tamen eodem modo quo dicitur de creaturis, sed excellentiori modo. *Ibid.*, q. 29, a. 3.

more prominence specifically in the writings of Aquinas, for the simple reason that its component elements—intelligence and will—are fully treated by him. He answers an objection to the effect that this name person is not applied to God in the Scriptures, by saying there was no need of the word until the idea it stood for was called in question. This name is especially appropriate to God "since to subsist in a rational nature is great dignity."[21] The terms of the definition given by Boetius, adopted and explained by St. Thomas—person is the individual substance of a rational nature—are realized in God. Individual means one, distinct from others; substance means existence per se, no need of any other for its existence; rational nature means intelligible nature in general, not the discursive way of reasoning of our intelligence. In this light, the definition is perfectly valid, receiving confirmation from the various elements that compose it. Today it would be interesting to show in the light of psychological experiment that personality is actually a perfection. I do not think the above definition would need modification as giving the essentials of the conception, though it is possible that certain qualities

[21] Magnae dignitatis est in rationali natura subsistere. . . Sed dignitas divinae excedit omnem dignitatem; et secundum hoc maxime competit Deo nomen personae. *Ibid.*, ad 2.

usually attributed to personality would be shown to rest on a less secure basis than is ordinarily supposed. As yet there is no decided case even against any of these, such as unity, permanence, and the like.[22] Mr. Bradley has a bit of reasoning, on the subject of personality, that is after the fashion of Aquinas. "The Absolute, though known, is higher, in a sense, than our experience and knowledge; and in this connection I will ask if it has personality. . . We can answer in the affirmative or negative according to its meaning. Since the Absolute has everything, it of course must possess personality. And if by personality we are to understand the highest form of finite spiritual development, then certainly in an eminent degree the Absolute is personal. For the higher (we may repeat) is always the more real. And, since in the Absolute the very lowest modes of experience are not lost, it seems even absurd to raise such a question about personality."[23] Thus, again, this concept is derived from what we perceive in rational creatures; we eliminate its imperfection as there found, and in the refined condition we attribute it to God. "This name person is not proper to God, if we consider whence the name arises, but if we consider what

[22] Cfr. Piat, *La Personne Humaine.*

[23] *Appearance and Reality*, p. 531.

the name signifies it is highly proper to God."[24]

We might go through the whole series of attributes as found in St. Thomas, and we should note the same principles operating through all. When we considered the proofs for God's existence we arrived at five aspects of God, and we have just considered a few more in detail to illustrate his method and to show how consistent he is throughout the long and difficult handling of the Conception of God as known by us. Yet did we follow this discussion to its end, prolong it as we would, the final outcome would not be a strictly proper or adequate concept of God. We should only know God in a way, though our knowledge would be real and thorough to that extent—a fact long ago pointed out by St. Chrysostom, and valid against Agnosticism. A partial knowledge, says he, is not absolute ignorance, nor is relative ignorance the absolute absence of knowledge.[25] We can designate at most, the lines along which our endeavors are to move in forming as perfect a Concept of God as is in our power. These have

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[24] Quamvis hoc nomen, persona, non conveniat Deo quantum ad id a quo impositum, est nomen; tamen quantum ad id ad quod significandum imponitur, maxime Deo convenit. *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 29, a. 3 ad 2.

[25] *Com. in Matth.*, 21: 23.

been well expressed by Hontheim. To form a concept of God it is sufficient: a) to have the things of the world, from which we can conceive perfection in general, and single perfections in particular; b) to have a faculty of the mind to overcome contradictory notions, by which we can conceive individual perfections, denying the conjoined imperfection, by which especially we can think of them without limit, as infinite; c) that we can unite into one notion the perfections thus conceived.[26] These are the principles of Aquinas that we have tried to set forth in our presentation. He follows them out faithfully, and accepts the conclusion they offer. The concept is analogous, derived through a species or similitude that reflects God mediately. All knowledge is through species, but we have no immediate species of God, hence, strictly, no proper or quiddative concept, for a concept of this nature should agree alone with the object it represents.

St. Thomas then, not without meaning, gives as the most appropriate name of God—*Qui Est*. He gives his reasons for this attitude; they are taken from the meaning of the phrase, from its universality, and from its co-signification. "It does not mean any form, but being itself, and

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[26] *Theodicea*, p. 19.

since the Being of God is His essence, which is proper to no other, it is manifest that among other names, this especially names God properly, for everything is named from its form."[27] All other names "determine God in a way, but our intellect can not know God at present as He is in se."[28] Finally, this phrase means "*esse in praesenti*, and thus is properly applied to God, for His Being knows neither past nor future."[29] This phrase—Qui Est—is the proper Concept of God considered in Himself, since He alone is self-existent Being, and all else dependent, created existence; but this concept does not say enough for us as it stands; it is truly comprehensive of all the attributes we can conceive of God, yet not satisfying to us. There is a two-fold tendency of the human mind—the one to contraction and the other to expansion. We desire to press into as small a compass as possible the greatest amount of matter, and thus we seek for a telling phrase and an all-embracing idea. The other tendency asserts itself when we seek to know to its fullest the subject we are handling. We use every available

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[27] Non enim significat formam aliquam, sed ipsum esse. Unde cum esse Dei sit ipsa ejus essentia, et hoc nulli alii conveniat, manifestum est quod inter alia nomina hoc maxime proprie nominat Deum. Unumquodque enim denominatur a sua forma. *Sum. Theol.*, I. q. 13, a. 11.

[28] *Ibid.* [29] *Ibid.*

means to make it yield all that it contains, we analyze it thoroughly. St. Thomas has recognized both these tendencies in the question of God. He has given us the short phrases—Actus Purus, Omnino Immutabilis, Qui Est; but knowing how little these convey to our minds as they stand, he has subjected them to a careful and detailed analysis with the result that we have tried to express. "God considered in Himself is altogether one and simple, but still our intellect knows Him according to diverse conceptions, because it cannot see Him as He is in Himself."[30] We shall then follow the lead of our intelligence at work on created things and arrive at the varied and full number of perfections they mirror forth, for they are but ambassadors of a King whose riches they can not fully portray; and the result of it all will be a Concept, showing, that "God is One, Simple, Perfect, Infinite, Intelligent, and Willing."[31]

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[30] Deus autem in se consideratus est omnino unus et simplex, sed tamen intellectus noster secundum diversas conceptiones ipsum cognoscit; eo quod non potest ipsum, ut in seipso est, videre. *Ibid.*, I, q. 13, a. 12.

[31] *Opus.* 2.

EPILOGUE.

It has been well said that Agnosticism is rather a mental attitude than a doctrine. There is so much truth in it, and it enters so largely into the actual state of our cognitions, that it is unfortunate that it should have set itself to combat ex professo the limited knowledge that it is our portion to attain and possess. Its position, however, is not legitimate, and the human mind will hold all the more tenaciously to its birthright, because it is so meagre, and still more because there are men leagued to wrest this little from it. And yet Agnostics themselves lay claim to a great store of knowledge, quite sufficient to destroy their profession of ignorance. There is some truth in the statement of Ladd: "A more stupendous system of alleged cognitions that have absolute value, and that concern ultimate and permanent entities and unalterable truths, has never been put forth by any reflective mind than the system issued under the cover of this agnosticism."[1] A definition of terms would go a great way in

[1] *Phil. of Knowledge*, p. 592.

giving the true position of the limits of our knowledge.

We find it frequently stated in Theistic presentations, that the manifestation of the Creator in His works is of such a nature that a further knowledge of Him through another source, namely, Revelation, is almost a necessary consequence. In fact, Prof. Flint devotes a chapter in his work on Theism, to discussing what he calls the Insufficiency of Mere Theism. St. Thomas also advocates the moral necessity of Revelation in arguments that have become commonplaces in Apologetics. The knowledge of God is "the result of a studious inquiry" that most men can not undertake—either on account of their "natural indisposition to know", their occupations in life, or indolence, since the "consideration of almost the whole of philosophy is related to the knowledge of God." Moreover, this would be a lifelong quest, and even then "on account of the weakness of our intellect in judging, error is generally found in the investigation of human reason." "Therefore the Divine Clemency has fruitfully provided, that even those things that reason can investigate, be held by faith; and thus all men can easily become partakers of divine knowledge, without doubt and without error."[2]

[2] *C. G.*, l. 1. c. 4.

Revelation gives us a firmer and more extended knowledge than we can attain to by the simple light of reason. Yet St. Thomas finds the gift of Revelation very inadequate to exhaust the knowledge we can have of God.

We have seen how St. Thomas held that all men have a knowledge of God *in confuso*, in the sense explained; they ascend to a higher knowledge through Demonstration, which is still very imperfect; Revelation adds its portion, and still, to the mind of Aquinas, we are far from being satisfied. Man craves for more knowledge, he is longing for a view that will end his desires while it will not cease to employ his knowing power. This satisfaction and reposeful mental activity can only find a home in the presence of the Power that implanted this unrest in man. "We, in as far as we know that God exists, and other facts already presented, are not quieted in desire, but we desire yet to know God in His essence",[3] we seek His Face. St. Thomas then concludes that man's ultimate happiness is to know God. Ultimate happiness is to be sought in the operation of the intellect alone, since no desire leads to such a height as the desire of understanding the truth. All our desires, whether of pleasure or any kind what-

[3] *C. G.*, l. 3, c. 50.

soever, can not rest in aught else. But the desire of truth is not satisfied till it reach the highest Source and Author of all."[4]

We noted before that in the system of Aquinas God is the Creator and End of Man. The imperfection of our knowledge, and the desire we have for a more and more perfect knowledge, opens out the prospect of another life to Aquinas, where the God we know so little about at present will be known as the Infinite, All-embracing Reality that will give us not only intellectual peace, but will spread before us riches now unknown. Aquinas then justly remarks, "let those blush who seek the happiness of man, so highly placed, in lower things."[5]

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[4] *C. G.*, l. 3, c. 50.

[5] *C. G.*, l. 3. c. 49.

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ERRATA.

On p. 36, l. 2, read *fundamental* for *fundamenial.*
On p. 70, l. 17, read *ideas* for *idea.*
On p. 77, l. 7 of notes, read *complementum* for *eomplementum,*
On p. 80, l. 11 of notes, read *I call* for *is called.*
On p. 83, l. 16, read *perception* for *preception.*
On p. 87, l. 16, supply *to* before *the axiom.*
On p. 112, l. 2 of notes, read *quamdam* for *quandam.*
On p. 126, l. 6 of notes, read *universi* for *universali.*
On p. 130, l. 19, read *First* for *Frst.*

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